CHIMES *and the* CHILDREN

W. RUSSELL BOWIE

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Walter Russell Bowie, D.D.

Rector Grace Church, New York

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Chimes and the Children

Talks to Children

By
WALTER RUSSELL BOWIE, D.D.
Rector, Grace Church, New York

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New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 17 North Wabash Ave.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 99 George Street

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I

CHIMES AND THE CHILDREN

NOT long ago a great new chime of bells was made for a church I know. For many months the chimes were in the making. The metals that went into the bells had to be mixed very, very carefully, and then melted and poured into the moulds, so that at length the bells would come out exactly right in their material and of the right size to sound the way they were supposed to. When the bells were finished, they were ranged in two long rows on the sidewalk, underneath the high church tower into which they were to be lifted, and scores of people coming along the street would stop and look at the rows of shining bells. Some of the bells were very big ones, almost as tall as a man, and weighing more than two thousand pounds each; and some of them were little bells that seemed dwarfed in contrast with the big ones. But at length all of them together, big bells and little bells, were hoisted up into the high tower and ranged there ready for the whole chime to be rung.

Now suppose the makers of the chime had said, "There are so many bells here that it will not make

any difference if one or two are wrong. Especially it will not make any difference if one of the little bells is wrong. There will be so many other bells and so many bigger ones, that one which is out of tune will not make any difference, and nobody will notice it in the midst of the ringing of the rest."

But you know that would not be true. Just one bell which was wrong could ruin the music of all the rest. Big bell or little bell, that would be the same. Every time it rang, instead of fitting in with the music, it would cut through it like a rusty saw. People who wanted the chime to be beautiful would listen, and whenever they heard that wrong bell they would shiver and feel as if they had the goose-flesh. The whole chime would be ruined for them because of the bad bell which they had to keep hearing, and in the moments when that particular bell was not ringing, even then they could not quite enjoy the music of the other bells because they would always be expecting that the next moment the bad bell might come in.

When one bell is wrong, the makers of the bells must set to work and correct it. Sometimes they take a chisel and very carefully shave off from the edges of the bell little tiny flecks of metal, until presently the bell has the tone it ought to have. But sometimes a bell may be so out of tune that there is nothing for it but to take it back and melt it up and make it all over again.

As the one bell, even though it be a little bell, may spoil the chime, so one little thing in a boy's or girl's heart may spoil the music of happiness and helpfulness which they ought to make. St. Paul wrote once to Christian people whom he knew and loved, and he said they must be "making melody with your heart unto the Lord." That is what we ought to be doing, and sometimes a very little thing may spoil the melody. Some grudge which we have kept in our heart, some ill-will toward somebody that makes us flare out with some hateful word, or some bad temper or bad manners when a particular thing does not go to suit us, may be like the bell out of tune which spoils the chime. It is a hard matter, but it is a very important one, to keep all the bells of our heart in tune with the music of the love of God. And then what we do and what we are will be like chimes "making melody unto the Lord."

II

THE BIG, LITTLE THINGS

"THE big, little things"—that sounds queer, as though it were a contradiction. If a thing is big, it is not little. If it is little, it is not big. So how can it be little and big at the same time?

That is a question which ought to be answered. And a very good way to find the answer is to look into our Gospels and remember some of the sayings of Jesus. Once He told His disciples about salt. Now salt is not impressive looking. It is made up of very tiny little grains. But salt is very important. It keeps things from spoiling. Goodness is like that, said Jesus. Every little grain of a clean thought and clean desire helps to keep our whole life clean and sound.

Another time Jesus reminded His disciples of a candle. A candle is not very big in comparison to the size of a whole room, and an unlighted candle is of no use at all. But let the candle be lighted, and it will throw brightness before you wherever you want to go through the whole house. If the little candle of the thought of God is lighted in the

thought of a boy's or girl's heart, then the whole heart is brighter and gladder for its shining.

Another time, Jesus said that goodness is like seed sown in the ground. The seed is so tiny that presently the earth hides it completely. You might look and look, and you could not see that it was there. Nevertheless, it will grow. Roots will go down, and the blades of the wheat or the corn will come up, and presently all the field will be filled with the rich harvest.

And once again, Jesus said that if one should give even a cup of cold water to a little child who was thirsty, that could be a beautiful and a blessed thing. Why should He have said that this would matter? A cup of water is very common and does not seem very valuable. Any one can do a little thing like giving a cup of water if he chooses. Yes. But it can be given with a difference. If it is given because one wants to be helpful and kind and goes out of one's way just to do a loving deed which others are too busy to bother about, then it becomes full of a grace like the grace of God Himself. A little thing, because of the spirit which was back of it, becomes a big thing.

So that is the way it was with Jesus' teaching. And that is the way it can be with all life when it is lived in Jesus' way. The little thing *can* become the big thing, because into the little thought or the little act can be put the great purpose of faithfulness and kindness and love. which are the

biggest and most powerful things in this world. Most of this book is made up of stories of that kind of little things; for it makes a great and happy difference in all our living to remember that the little things we see about us, and the little things we have to do, do not need to be little at all, but instead can be very, very big.

III

HOW TO WIN A RACE

ONCE there was an old shoemaker who made the kind of shoes which are worn on running tracks. Some of you have seen those shoes and know what they are like. They are made of very soft thin leather, and in the soles they have long sharp spikes so that the runner will never slip upon the track.

Now this particular old shoemaker was not only a good maker of shoes but a man who thought about things, and because of his clear thinking could give good advice. Once he was talking to a group of high school boys who were on the track team, and he said to them, "I will tell you two things to remember if you want to win a race.

"In the first place," he said, "don't bother too much about the others who are running against you in the race. If you are ahead, never look over your shoulder to see how near the other man may be. Look ahead to the finish line and do your utmost every minute to get there as soon as you can.

"And the second thing is this: Don't look only at the finish line, but look beyond it. Fix your eye on something farther than the end of the race, and run as though you had to keep at your utmost speed until you got there."

What the old shoemaker said was wise advice,

and many great runners know it. In the spring of 1925, perhaps the greatest runner in the world came to America. He lives in Finland, and his name is Nurmi. He ran in many races against all the best runners that the United States could produce, and never did he fail to win except twice,—once when he was sick, and once when the race was for a very short distance to which he was not accustomed. He is a long-distance runner, and his habit is to run with a stop-watch in his hand. He measures his own time and sees how long it has taken him to run the first half mile, and the first mile, and the mile and a quarter, and so on to the end of the long race, whatever it may be. Dozens of times before, he has practised over the same distance. He knows exactly how fast he ought to be going, and he knows that if only he keeps up to the pace that he has set for himself, he need not bother about the other runners in the race, for no one else can equal him.

The great runners also, as the old shoemaker said, do not look merely at the finish line. They do not say to themselves, "If only I can get there, that will be enough." They look beyond; and at the finish line they are travelling like the wind, as though the race had just begun instead of being ended.

Often I have thought of that advice of the old shoemaker when I have seen boys and girls in school, and especially at commencement time,

when the prizes are being given out. For there are other races, of course, than the races which are run by our feet upon the track. There are races in which the mind runs against the mind, when boys and girls see which can make the best record in the things they have to learn. Sometimes one may be discouraged because it looks as though another one were getting ahead, but never mind that. Keep studying and trying and practising until you have attained the very best that you can do, and then keep trying to add to that and do better. And remember that the finish line is not where some think it is. It is not what you may reach this week or next week, but the mark you must reach in the years to come, that counts. Never think that because you have ALMOST succeeded, and have ALMOST mastered the subject you set out to learn, and ALMOST grasped the prize, that you can stop. While you are slowing down because you think you have already won, somebody else may pass you, and you are beaten. Keep on as the old shoemaker said, not only to the finish line but beyond, so that when you do finish any piece of work, you will finish it with your utmost strength.

And then if you want to sum up what we have been thinking and fasten it with a text from the New Testament, you can remember what St. Paul once said: "Know ye not that they that run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Even so run that ye may obtain."

IV

WHEN THE RACE IS IN RELAYS

YOU remember the last words we were thinking of were the words of St. Paul. "Know ye not that they that run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Even so run that ye may obtain." And they are true concerning many of the races which we have to run. Sometimes we are tested each one against the other. The world waits to see which particular boy or girl can do best the thing that needs to be done, which has the most patience, the most strength, and the most right to be given the fine responsibility and to win the prize.

Yet that is not the only kind of race there is. Kipling, the English poet, wrote:

> "The race is run by one and one,
> And never by two and two."

But that is not wholly true. There are some races which are run not by one and one, but by two and two, and three and three, and four and four.

Those are what we call the relay races. Every spring and summer at the colleges there are what are known as the relay carnivals, when nearly all the great races on the track are not races of single

men against each other but races of relay teams. In the relay race, one man from each team lines up at the starting point, and when the starter's pistol fires, they all leap away in that first lap of the race. Around the track once they all go, each man trying, of course, to outrun the other, but not only for his own sake but for the sake of his team-mate who will be waiting when he comes to the finish. For when this first group of runners has come round the track and back to the place where they started, there, lined up waiting for them, are runners who are to take up the next lap of the race,—one other runner for each one who has run in the first part of it. So the man from among the racers who comes in first touches the hand of his team-mate, and off he goes in the lead for the second part of the race. No man can start until his team-mate who has run in the lap before him has touched his hand, but as soon as his team-mate does touch him he can go.

Usually a relay race is made up of four laps, and there are four runners on each team, each one running when the other has finished. The man who runs the last lap and comes in first at the finish makes his team the winner of the race, but he himself may not have been the chief winner of it. It may be because the three men who ran before him gave him such a long start over the runners in the last lap that he is able to come in ahead. Then the men before him are just as glad and have just as much glory as he. They were not there at the fin-

ish, but they made it possible for him as winner to be there.

So it is with many of the real races of our life. Everybody who does his part to the utmost of his strength gives a start to somebody who will take up the race after him. Many of the best athletes in schools have been made such not only by what they themselves knew how to do, but by the start and encouragement that somebody else gave them. There are boys and girls who have gone to college and have made brilliant records, but they were not the only winners in all that they did. Back home there was a mother and a father or an older brother working to keep the lad in college, and whatever he does is due to their hands which gave him a start. Life all through may be a great game like the relay race, where every right thing we do, every effort we make, every faithful running of our own race of duty, helps somebody else to go out toward the victory which belongs not only to the last runner but to all.

V

THE MAN WHO DARED FOR OTHERS

IN the great war there was a chaplain in the British Army greatly beloved by all the men who knew him. He was a little man with a slight body, and to see him you would not imagine that he could stand much hardship. But wherever the soldiers went, there he went too, along the front lines, through danger and—what was almost worse—through all the endless days of standing guard there in the mud and water of the trenches. His own courage kept the soldiers from losing theirs, and he had an Irish wit and humour which could make men laugh even in the days when they were tired and bored and sick to death of the whole dirty business of war.

One day especially he did a thing that was heroic beyond the usual. There had been heavy fighting, and a part of the regiment had become separated from the rest, and were left with the shells bursting about them and in immediate danger of being killed or captured, in a little clump of trees to which they had advanced. The colonel of the regiment came along the lines and gave the order for the regiment to fall back. "But," said the chaplain to the

colonel, "what about those men of ours who are separated over yonder?" The colonel told him in none too polite language to mind his own business, and again gave the order for the regiment to withdraw. But the chaplain said he would mind his own business, and part of his business was to help to rescue those men. So he stooped down in the trenches and picked up two pasteboard boxes which were lying there, and stuck a fist through each one of them and put them together, one sliding inside the other, like an accordion. To the men standing round he said: "We have got to rescue those boys over yonder. I will be the band and go in front and you come along with me." So out he went, making believe as though he were playing his accordion, until the soldiers laughed and shouted at the man who dared to jest in the face of death, and out they went behind him across the dangerous ground, and they did reach the part of the regiment which had been cut off and brought those men back in safety.

But the colonel was furious, for the chaplain had disobeyed him and made men go ahead without the colonel's orders. So he reported the chaplain for insubordination, which means, in army language, for not minding what the man who is supposed to command you says. And the chaplain was dismissed from his regiment and sent back in disgrace to England.

But that was not the end of the story. A bishop

who knew this chaplain sent word about him to the King, and the King sent for him and heard his story. The King was so much impressed that he made him one of his own chaplains, which gave him a rank of great honour. Then the chief of all the chaplains wrote to the heads of the British Army in France to ask why it was that the King's chaplain had been dismissed, and the result was that the colonel who had brought about the trouble was dismissed himself, and back went the chaplain to his regiment, to the joy of all the men.

That was a nice ending to the story. The villain triumphs for a little while, but down he goes and up comes the hero with a smile. But that was not the way the story looked to the chaplain that day when he led the men out of the trenches to rescue their brothers, contrary to the colonel's orders. He knew well enough then that trouble would come to him, and he had no way of knowing that he would ever get out of it. For all he could tell, he would be dismissed from the army for good and all, and his record would have a black mark on it forever after. Yet in spite of that he went ahead. He was not thinking of himself or of his own safety or of his own reputation. His spirit was like that of the great St. Paul, who said once: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself." Like St. Paul he was thinking of saving others, and not of saving himself; and in that he followed the way of Christ.

VI

GYPSY MOTHS

IN some parts of our country, and especially along the roads and streets of New England, among the most beautiful things that you will see are the elms. If you go on a long walk through that country, or if you ride in an automobile, you will pass through many lovely little villages, some of them dating back almost to the time when the Pilgrims came in the *Mayflower*. And in each one of those villages, the long street down the center of it is usually lined with huge old elms. Their great trunks are much bigger around than you could possibly reach with your arms. Their graceful branches arch high above the gables of the houses and droop down again in a beautiful roof of green over the street. No kind of tree which grows anywhere is more graceful than these glorious elms.

But often you may go into one of these villages and look down the avenue of the trees and you will say to yourself, "Why, what is the matter? There is something queer which I do not understand. The leaves ought to be green, but they are not green. There ought to be a thick covering of them, but it looks as though I could see through

the leaves everywhere." They seem not to be real leaves, but only ghosts of leaves, so that sometimes it appears as though nothing were there against the sky at all.

If you should look closer, you would see that what has happened is that the soft green substance of each leaf has all been eaten away. Nothing is left except the stiff little veins and skeleton of the leaf, hanging stripped and bare from the twigs. And then if you should ask some one what has happened, he would answer, "It is the gypsy moth. Caterpillars have swarmed over the trees, up every great limb and out over the branches, and they have eaten away all that was fresh and beautiful in the foliage."

Through New England and through other parts of our country the gypsy moths have done so much damage as staggers one to think of. Many trees they have killed, many others they have weakened so that they have lost their beauty. At Harvard University, in the Yard between the ancient buildings there used to be great rows of elms; but now they are all gone because the gypsy moth killed them. The moths became so bad that the United States government and the governments of the different states sent out hundreds of men with all sorts of stuff to put on the trees, which might poison the moths. Not only a few hundreds of dollars, not only a few thousands of dollars, but actually millions of dollars have been spent to try

to check the damage which the gypsy moths were doing.

And how do you suppose the gypsy moths came into this country? Once there were none of them here at all. They simply did not exist in the United States. But there was a man who was travelling in another country where the gypsy moths lived, and he had a notion that out of the cocoons which the gypsy moths spun he might learn to make a kind of artificial silk. So he brought some gypsy moths back to this country to see what he could do, and while he was experimenting some of the moths got loose and flew away. Then they began to breed and multiply, and from the moths which this one man, through ignorance and carelessness, let loose, the whole army of them, which have done such damage in this country, grew.

It is a dangerous thing to let little evil things loose. Sometimes boys and girls do with small sins what that man did with the gypsy moth. They play with them, and experiment with them, and do not know that harm will come. "Here is a little lie," one says, "but only a very little one. Besides, I may get advantage from it. This little bit of cheating may help me to get a better mark in school. This little thing which I say that I have done and have not done may make some one think better of me, so that he will give me something which I want." As the man who brought in the gypsy moth had the notion that the moth might spin for

him some artificial silk, so one of us may think that the little lie can spin for him a result he wants. But the first thing we know, the evil which we were playing with flies away, and then it begins to multiply, and presently we are astonished to discover that it is doing more damage than we can catch up with and stop in a long, long time. In the Old Testament there is a warning against "the little foxes that spoil the vines." There might be a warning against the little moths that spoil the trees. And all the Bible is full of warnings of little sins, that once let loose may spoil our lives.

VII

THE LITTLE SHIP WITH THE GREAT CAPTAIN

ONE day on an avenue in a great city I went past the window of a company which sells tickets to people who are going on long journeys,—tickets for the steamships which go across the ocean, and tickets in far-away, foreign lands, and all across the world. In the window was a picture which I stopped to look at. It showed a huge ocean liner, with her towering steel sides, her many decks, and the great smoke-stacks pouring out smoke from the mighty engines down below. And floating on the water at the side of the great liner was another boat, so little and so different that it seemed hardly more than a toy. It was built, not of steel, but of wood. Instead of many decks, it had only one deck, with a curving bow and a high carved stern. It had no smoke-stacks, but only two masts with square sails spread upon them. Any one looking at the picture might almost have laughed at the tiny ship. "What use is that," he might have said, "in comparison with the great liner, towering there above it? It is pretty to look at, but surely it does not amount to much."

But as a matter of fact, the little ship has been more important than the huge liner in the picture, more important than any of the great vessels that come into New York and Liverpool and London and the other harbours of our world to-day, more important, one might even say, than all of them put together. For the little ship first showed the way in which all the great ships follow. If it had not been for the little ship, there might never have been any New York, never any new world discovered, and no great fleets of vessels sailing back and forth across the ocean as there are to-day.

For the tiny ship was the ship which bore Columbus. It was great, not because of its size but because of its service, not because of the way it looked but because of the way it went, not because of the number of its decks but because of the kind of captain who walked the one deck it had. When that boat was built, people believed the world was flat. They had never sailed out far into the Atlantic Ocean, and they did not dare to. They thought it was full of great sea-monsters, fierce and horrible, which might swallow up ships that went too far. And even if there were no sea-monsters, they thought that nevertheless it would be a deadly thing to go sailing out recklessly on that ocean, for any moment one might come to the place where the flat earth ended, and the ship might go plunging off through the roaring waters into space. But Columbus believed the earth was

round. If he should keep on toward the west, he would find his way round again to the east. He believed it so much that he persuaded the Queen of Spain to help him equip three ships, the one he sailed on and two others, and out he went upon the voyage which no man had ever dared before. He did not find an open way around the world, but he found something even more wonderful. He found the first lands of a great new world which lay on the other side from Europe. He opened the way along which other men were afterward to come and discover the whole of this huge American Continent of ours, and settle it, and make it into the homes where we live to-day. That is why the little vessel of Columbus is really larger in importance than the hugest ship which has ever been floated since. It began what they continue. It led the way, and they were simply to follow in the way which had once for all been proved.

So as I looked at the picture of the two ships that day I knew what it is well for all of us to remember, that it is not bigness which counts most. That is true of ships and it is true of people. "What can I do," say the small boy and the small girl, "that will be of any importance? There are other boys and girls in my school and in my street who are bigger than I am. There are others who have more money, and can wear finer clothes. They seem so much more important than I do, that what is the use of my thinking that I can be a

leader?" But leadership does not depend upon the showy things which people look at. It does not depend upon the expensiveness of the ship, but upon the kind of captain who is on its deck. Suppose that you should say to yourself, as Columbus did, that you will not be content just to think and act in the way that ordinary people do, and believe only the things which ordinary people believe. Suppose you have a faith, such as Columbus had, that there are new ways and new worlds to be discovered. Here in school, for example, are the old habits, which every one has been accustomed to for years, and many of which are bad habits. New boys who are shy and timid, instead of being helped and made to feel at home, are bullied and hazed. The queer boy is teased, and laughed at, and made miserable. This is the way it always has been, and this is the way nearly everybody thinks it will always be. But suppose you say to yourself, as Columbus did, that just because things have never been tried is no proof that they cannot be tried, if some one is brave enough to venture. Suppose you decide that you will launch out on new ways of being kind, until it is as though you had discovered a whole new world of a better spirit for the life of your school to move in. And suppose, as you grow older, you keep on with that same idea. Suppose you refuse to listen to those who think that, because some old meanness or dishonesty or impurity has been what people have

been accustomed to for a long time, therefore they never can get beyond these forever. Most people were content to think that the old world was all there was, but not Columbus. He went out and found a new one, and you can do the same. You can be showing boys and girls, and some day men and women, that the kind of life which we can live is a much finer and bigger thing than they have ever supposed. Then, whether you have had much money or have had fine clothes or have looked very important, will not matter. As the little ship was great because it carried Columbus, so people will know that you are great because they see that a brave soul is the captain which guides all that you think and do.

VIII

SUN, AND MOON, AND STARS

SOMETIMES in the sermons to boys and girls I use very big texts, and sometimes very little ones. To-day the text is almost the biggest one you could possibly imagine, for it is nothing less than—the sun, and the moon, and the stars.

The sermon which I have for you on that big text to-day is mostly not mine, but another's. It will be made up of three verses of a poem which I should like you to learn,—a poem written by a glorious minister and man of God whom I knew, who loved boys and girls, and loved also all the bright beauty of God's world.

All of us know how wonderful a thing the sun is, and know that we could never get along without it. Sometimes we have been up very early in the morning, and have seen the sun come riding up over the horizon like a great chariot of gold. We have watched the darkness vanish and the streamers of light march across the world like the shining flags of day which drive away the darkness. We have heard the birds begin to sing and all the world wake and stir with life. We know how much better we feel on a dry and sunny day

than on a cloudy one. It is a cheering thing to see the great sun shining in the unclouded sky, and when we see it we can remember this first verse of the three I want you to learn.

"Shining Sun, Shining Sun,
Bringing back the day,
Have you any word for me
In my work and play?
Little Boy, Little Boy,
If you're good and true,
Wheresoe'er you work or play
Light will shine from you."

But the day is not the only beautiful time. Sometimes we have been out at night and seen the silver moon floating there above us like a ship with shining sails in the deep blue ocean of the sky. We have watched the bright track of it across the still waters of a lake, or dancing in the rolling waves of the ocean, and looking at the moon we can remember this second verse.

"Silver Moon, Silver Moon,
Sailing through the sky,
Have you any word for me
From your home on high?
Little Girl, Little Girl,
Loving be to all.
Shine like me on rich and poor,
On the great and small."

Some nights, though, the moon is not in the sky; but the stars are always there. On most nights we

can see them, and even when clouds make a veil across the heavens, we can know that back of the clouds the stars are shining just the same. Men on ships at sea look up at the stars and find the North Star which is always steady in its place. Then they know how to steer. "Yonder is north where the star is," they say. "So if we face toward that, the south will be behind us, and east is there to the right, and west to the left; and whichever way we want to go, we can know how to find that way." And people who get lost on tangled roads or in a strange country, if they can see the stars, may find their way home.

Then, looking at the stars, so steady and sure and true, we can remember the third verse of the poem, and know that its message, and the message of the other verses, is really meant for us.

"Little Star, Little Star,
Shining far in space,
Have you any word for me,
In my lowly place?
Little Child, Little Child,
Sailors steer by me,
You can lead a star-like life
Strong and steadfast be."

IX

NORTH WINDOWS

ONCE I wrote a book of children's sermons and called it "Sunny Windows," for that was the name of the first sermon in the book. In that sermon I told about how hard it is to make flowers grow where the sun does not shine, yet of how, if you put a plant in the south window, where the warm, bright sun pours in, it will flourish. And I told about the boys and girls who are like the plants in the north windows, the poor and the friendless and the lonely, and of how it is our business to help bring every one we can to the south windows of kindness and encouragement, where the sun shines and the world is glad and bright.

But suppose somebody does have to be like a plant in the north window, with no friends coming along to help it to a better place. Suppose some boy or girl is born poor and has to struggle hard and lives in a gloomy street, or out on some lonely farm where there seems to be nothing but heavy labour from morning to night. What shall such an one do? Must that boy or girl say, "There is just nothing left to do except to wither and grow stale and at last dry up to nothing"? If we hap-

pen to find ourselves in the north windows instead of in the sunny south windows of our world, shall we say that there is just no use in even trying to blossom and grow?

Well, there is a pretty little plant called the begonia which must have a stouter heart than other sorts of flowers, for it will blossom and thrive even in the north windows where no cheerful sunlight ever comes. It does not spend its time moping and pining and wishing it were somewhere else. It makes the best of where it is and goes on bravely to grow in spite of everything.

So also there have been people like that. Brave old Martin Luther, who was the champion of religious freedom in the time when it was hard for any man to stand up and speak the truth, was like a plant that began in a north window. He did not have any rich parents nor luxurious home nor easy way to school. But he was not ashamed of his poverty. "I am a peasant's son," he said. "My father, my grandfather, and my great-grandfather were genuine peasants." He knew that because a boy was born to hardship it might be all the better for him because it would make him have to try the harder. "Poor men's sons must labour to lift themselves out of the dust and must endure greatly, and because they have nothing to boast about or pride themselves upon, they trust God, control themselves, and keep still."

In his life after he grew to be a man, he had

plenty of things that made it seem as though he were in a north window. The bitter winds of opposition and hatred blew upon him. He had very little sunlight of easy times, but he went on working and growing nevertheless.

Abraham Lincoln was like a plant in a north window. His father was as poor as a man could be, and ignorant besides. When Lincoln was twenty-four years old, he was still surrounded by rough people who lived mostly on corn bread and salt pork and slept in cabins without windows and did not know how to read. He learned to read himself only by borrowing books from people here and there who had them, and he would lie on the floor and pore over the pages at night by the light of pine shavings which he threw upon the fire on the hearth. With difficulties such as these, most people would never have tried to make anything of themselves. They would have given up at the very beginning and have said it was unfair that they should have been in the north windows of this world's hard places, while others had the sunlight of prosperity and ease. But Lincoln did not talk that way. In spite of everything, his mind and spirit grew till he became one of the great ones of his time.

There is a book which I have read which some day I should like to have you read. It is the story of the life of a man by the name of S. S. McClure. He became the head of one of the best known

publishing houses of America and made a large success in business. But when he first came to this country, he was only a poor immigrant boy from Ireland. And out in the northern part of Illinois one winter, when he was trying to get to school, he had to get up at four o'clock every morning to milk the cows for the farmer he worked for. And then, because it was bitter cold in the winter mornings and he had no overcoat, he would run all the four miles to school in order to keep warm. "Speed," he said, "was my overcoat." But in spite of the hard life he led, when he graduated from school the oration he wrote was on "Enthusiasm." He was not going to let the north window chill him and keep him from succeeding. He would grow and blossom in spite of all.

So you see that, though the sunny windows are very good things, they are not everything. People can be greater than the places where they happen to be, and the brave heart which does not fear the gloomy weather will outstrip many a comfortable somebody who sits and basks in the sun.

X

"STRONG BOY WANTED"

ONE day I was going along the street and in the window of a store I saw a sign which had on it three words painted in big black letters. These were the words:

STRONG BOY WANTED

You can see what that sign meant. The man in the store was advertising for a boy to work for him, and it was a special kind of a boy that he wanted. Suppose some boy passing along the street had gone into the store and said to the man whose store it was, "I saw your sign and so I have come in to work for you. I am a boy, so I am what you want." And then suppose the man had said, "Yes, you are a boy, but what kind of a boy? Are you a strong boy? Have you good, hard muscles and can you lift heavy loads? There are things to be done in this store which an ordinary somebody cannot do. My sign did not say only 'Boy Wanted,' it said 'Strong Boy Wanted.'" Then if the one who had come in asking to be employed really were a strong boy, everything would be all right and he would get the

place. But if he were only a weak boy, or lazy, then he would have to go away, and the man in the store would wait until a really strong boy came along who could do the work which had to be done.

In a great many other places there is a sign like that, not always painted in black letters, but THERE nevertheless in what people are thinking about and looking for. " STRONG BOY WANTED." The captain of the football eleven cannot make up his team out of weak boys if he expects to win. He must always be looking for the strong boy. When a boy must be found to run a race, it must be not a boy who will get tired and stop in the first half of it, but a boy who is strong enough to run full speed all through, and so to win.

But the strong boys are not always measured by their muscle. There is another way of being strong besides the way that has to do with our bodies. A boy may be strong or weak according to what he is inside. If he is cowardly and mean and selfish, he is weak. If he is brave and faithful and unselfish, he is strong.

Often I think that in this world it is just as though God Himself were saying, " STRONG BOY WANTED." He has great work to be done which weak boys cannot do. Not just any kind of a person, but the right kind, must be found, before God's places of trust can be filled. He must find boys who are not content to be loafers and idlers

like the common crowd, but boys who are not afraid to tackle hard things for conscience's sake; boys who will speak the truth when others might lie; who will stand up against some evil which others have let alone, and will move it out of the way; who will dare to build up the right examples which others thought could not be built.

How do boys get to be strong? Gradually, by exercises, and by pitting the strength they have against efforts that call out a little more strength each time. There is an old tale of a boy who lifted a calf every day until at length he had lifted the cow. Every day the calf was growing bigger and heavier, but so was the boy growing stronger little by little, to lift the heavier thing. It is that way also with the strength of our soul inside. Each day brings its duty, and sometimes a harder duty than we have ever done before. Never mind. Don't be afraid of it. Be glad of the harder thing. And remember that no boy ever wanted in his heart to grow strong without God coming to his help to give him the strength he tried for. Then presently the sign will have found the one it was meant for, and God's call, "Strong Boy Wanted," will be answered by the boy whom He has made strong in you.

XI

THE RADIO INSIDE OURSELVES

EVERYBODY knows these days what the radio is, and pretty much everybody, even the smallest boys and girls, have heard one somewhere. It is wonderful to see how many homes have radios of their own. Not long ago, as a train which I was riding on went through a big city, I looked at the houses. It seemed to me that nearly every one I could see, little houses as well as big ones, had radio wires on their roofs. They were as thick as chimneys.

Now, what you will hear over the radio will depend upon two things. In the first place, it will depend on the kind of receiving set you have. If you have a very small and simple one, of course you cannot hear as much as if you had a big one; but even the biggest and best ones are not quite as hard to own as we might think. I know some small boys who go to an industrial school which meets every Saturday morning, when the regular school has holiday, and they learn how to make radio sets of their own. At commencement time they have them there on exhibition, and very proud they are of them, as they have a right to be.

In the second place, what you hear will depend

on what you listen for, and that will depend upon what you want. If you look at the programme of all the broadcasting stations in the newspaper, you will see many and many different things. Some of the whole is worth while, and some of it is just trash. Some of it is beautiful music from great orchestras, and some of it is cheap jazz and noise. You can hear silly chatter of people who are supposed to be funny, but are not; or you can hear some great man telling of something that he really knows, which will fill your mind with new interests for having heard it. Sometimes on Sundays you can hear whole church services, with sermons and the music of glorious choirs.

A wonderful thing is the radio. And the more we think of it, in some ways the less we understand it. Here we are in a room, and we are listening to the voice of some one speaking, or the music of some one playing whom we cannot see. Neither can we see anything queer or curious in the air. We cannot feel anything. There are no signs that any messages are coming to us until we turn the radio on, and then we hear. No matter whether we can explain it or not, it works.

It is a little like that with the messages which come to us from God. We say that we do not see God. How shall we know that He is near, and that He has something to say to us? By taking good care of that something within ourselves which is more valuable than any radio, more direct

and more wonderful,—the thing we call our conscience. Every one of us is given a conscience when he is born; but we can make our consciences finer and more sensitive if we want to, just as the boys of whom I told you made the fine radio receiving sets all by themselves. We can make this listening instrument inside ourselves so fine that it will be picking up the thoughts and ideas which God wants us to understand.

That is, our conscience can do this, and it will do it if the things which are good to hear are the things we want to hear. There are as many suggestions floating about in our world as there are radio programmes on the air. Some of them are cheap ideas of foolish people which would persuade our consciences not to think about God at all. There are evil ideas which whisper things that are mean and ugly. But always the great thoughts of God are coming to us, too, and if we tune our consciences in to hear these, they will fill our hearts with plans and purposes which we shall know to be the most interesting and beautiful things in all the world.

XII

THE CROWN OF THORNS

OUT in the deserts of the west there grows a bush which has on it great, gray thorns, sharp as needles, and each of them an inch or two long. Once I took some of these thorns and wove them into a circle, and as I looked at them and showed them to some boys and girls, I said, "This is like the crown of thorns which Jesus wore." Cruel were those thorns, so long and sharp and able to pierce so deep.

You remember how it was that Jesus wore a crown like that. On the Sunday before, no one would have imagined that He would be wearing a crown of thorns. Instead, on that day which we call Palm Sunday, He came into Jerusalem with the great multitude shouting round His path. They treated Him as though He were a king coming into Jerusalem, and indeed they thought He was,—the very king whom God had sent to lift His people into honour and power. But they had a wrong and selfish idea of what the king whom they wanted should be. They thought that he would make them rich and prosperous. He would give them what they wanted, regardless of whether that might be the thing which they should rightly need

to have. And when in a few days they found that Jesus was not to be the sort of king which they had thought of, and that there were not to be easy rewards for following Him, but that men would have to think of others and be faithful to hard duties and to give up for the moment much that they might desire for the glory of going with Him, then they turned and began to grow sullen and angry.

When the leaders for their own purposes wanted to put Jesus to death, the crowd joined with them. They cried against Him in Pilate's court, and so He was given to the soldiers to be crowned with thorns, mocked, and presently carried out to Calvary to be crucified. And though the thorns were cruel, and though their thrust went deep, I think the worst part of the crown of thorns for Jesus was the remembrance of how those who had hailed Him as their king had deserted Him. They had treated Him that day as though they really meant to crown Him like a king, but it was with thorns of denial and unfaithfulness that they had crowned Him instead.

"We should never have done that if we had been there," we say. But are we so very sure? Stop and think for a moment of what we ourselves may do. Every time we name the name of Jesus in Sunday school or in church, every time we confess Him in the creed or sing the hymns that tell of our love of Him, we are like the people who

welcomed Him when He came into Jerusalem. We say that He is our king and that we will honour and follow Him. That is a beautiful thing to do. But suppose another day, not long after, we act as though we had never heard the name of Jesus. Suppose we tell a lie, or make some selfish plan for our own pleasure which hurts somebody else, or bully and tease a little child. Then we are not making Jesus our king. We are not remembering that He must rule our hearts. On the contrary, we are crowning Him with the sharp thorns of disappointment. We make Him seem as though He were mocked and rejected, and not a king at all.

Who is there that really wants to do that? None of us at all. We do it sometimes because we forget and are stupid and the evil thought deceives us. But if we want to, we can keep the crown we want to give Him from ever turning into the crown of thorns. We can put upon the head of Jesus the real crown which is woven of our love, and loyalty, and faithfulness to Him.

XIII

THE BARRED DOOR

SUPPOSE you had a friend who always had loved you, and had done more for you than any one else in the world, and suppose one day that friend should come to the door of your house and you should open the door a little way and see him standing there, and then suppose you should say to him, "I know that you are my friend, and that you have loved me, and that I have said that I love you, but I do not want you to come into my house. Will you please go away?"

What do you think that friend would think of you? How would he explain to himself what had happened in your heart to make you shut the door? Do you not suppose that he would be very disappointed and saddened as he went away?

And when you had begun really to understand what you had done, what would you think of yourself? Could you be anything else than ashamed and very sorry?

"Oh," but you say, "what is the use of even supposing such a thing as this? Who could ever be so ungrateful and cold-hearted as to shut the door in the face of his own friend? I would not want to do such a thing as that, so why should I imagine it?"

But there is a picture which a great artist painted once, that makes us stop and think. It is a picture of a house with a shut door, and outside the door in the night is a figure with a lighted lantern in one hand. The other hand is knocking at the door, but the door does not open, and the One who is knocking is Jesus.

As He stands outside the door of that house in the picture, so Jesus stands outside the door of the heart of every boy and girl. With the ears of our conscience we hear the hand that is knocking at our heart's door, and we call out, "Who is there?" One day it may be as though the voice answered, "I am here, to bring you kindness." But we answer, "I do not want to be kind to-day. Something has made me cross, and I want to tell everybody exactly how cross I feel, and at this moment I hate everybody, especially my brothers and sisters, and I do not want to be kind. Go away." Another day it is as though the voice said, "I am here to show you how to be helpful." And we answer, "But I do not want to be helpful. I have things to do for myself, and I must not be bothered. I have my plans all made for what will be agreeable to me, and I do not want to be opposed by thinking of some one else. Go away." Or another time it is as though the voice said, "I am here because I have beautiful, hard things for you to do." And we answer, "But I do not want to do hard things, and they are not beautiful. I want

to do easy things. I want to be let alone to do as I please. Go away." Then, perhaps, the hand stops knocking, and the One who was standing outside the door does go away. Our conscience does not hear the voice any more, and if we look out of the window of our hearts to see who it was who had been knocking and now is gone away, we see that it was Jesus.

In the picture which I told you of, there is another thing which is well for us to remember. It is said that when the painter had finished it, he showed it to a friend, and his friend was surprised, and exclaimed, "But how could an artist like you paint a door and forget to put anything on it by which to open it?" "Oh," said the artist, "on this door there is only one latch, and that is on the inside." He understood how it is with these hearts of ours when Jesus comes. There is no way by which He can open the door Himself. The latch is on the inside. We must open it for Him. If He is to come in we must want Him to enter, or He must stand without.

When we really think of it, we know that we do not want Jesus to stand outside our hearts with the door shut against Him. We read in the New Testament how He used to go to the houses of those who welcomed Him. We think how beautiful it must have been for Simon Peter, in his house there in Capernaum, when any day he might look up, and there in the doorway would be Jesus

Himself with that wonderful look in His eyes which Simon Peter knew, and the word of friendship on His lips. We think what it must have been for Mary and Martha in their house in Bethany, when some evening a knock would come at the door at supper time, and they would go, perhaps a little startled, to see who might be there, and out of the twilight who should come in with the brightness in His face but Jesus Himself. Or we think how thrilled those two disciples must have been that night in the little village of Emmaus, when some one met them on the road, came into their house, and sat down to break bread with them, and they looked, and to their joyous amazement it was Jesus. We think how wonderful it would be if Jesus should come into our house in that same familiar, loving way. But Jesus, who is just as real now as He was then, although our eyes cannot see Him, does come and knock at the doors of the house of our hearts. It is He who is knocking every time we hear anything that makes us know we must try to be more kind and loving and brave than we are. To say "No" to that knocking, is to say "No" to Jesus; and to say "Yes" to it, is to let Jesus in. And when we do let Him in, we know that the house of our heart is so bright and glad beyond what it has ever been before, that we want to keep Him always and never let Him go away.

XIV

THE FOUNTAIN

ON one of the busiest and most crowded streets of New York, Broadway, there stands the lovely old building of Grace Church, with its white marble spire soaring up into the quiet sky above the noise and hurry of the street. At the side of the church, between it and the rectory, there is an open space where grass and flowers make a little garden behind the hedge-row. People coming up and down Broadway will often stop and look into the garden, because it seems so quiet and beautiful and so different from the hard cement of the street and the crowding brick fronts of the buildings. And lately they stop and look more than ever, because in the middle of the grass plot is a white stone fountain.

Now the fountain itself is a pretty thing, because the column which rises from its base and the shallow bowl at the top are graceful to look at, and at the top of all is a cunning little figure of a baby holding a big fish in its arms. Yet the stand below and the bowl and the figure would of themselves be not very interesting if they were not parts of a fountain; and a fountain is only a

fountain because water comes through it, and rises with its silver spray into the air and falls back with the tinkle of its waters. You cannot have a real fountain unless you have water. That is as plain as day.

But where does the water come from? It does not come out of the fountain itself; it comes *through* the fountain. The stone fountain must be connected by pipes under the ground to the big water mains under the streets of the city, and these water mains lead back mile after mile to—where? To reservoirs a long, long way off. The reservoirs which supply the city of New York are not within the city or anywhere near it. They are far away in the Catskill Mountains. There behind huge dams which have been built, waters are gathered from mountain springs and from mountain brooks, from the melting snows of the spring, and from the rains of the summer and the autumn storms. Flashing and clear the waters flow into the reservoirs from the mountain heights, and then great aqueducts carry these waters down to the city, and a part of that same stream comes to the little fountain that tinkles on Broadway. When you look at it, you may not be thinking of the reservoirs way off in the mountains, but if it were not for these reservoirs, there would be no water playing in the sunlight in the city.

Some day if you see that fountain, or another like it, it may make you think of something very

beautiful and true. Once Jesus was talking to a woman of Samaria, as you may read in the Gospel of St. John, and He said to her that He could give to any of His disciples water which would be to that disciple "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." He meant by this that He could be to the mind and heart of any one who loves Him just what the water is to the fountain. His thoughts can come into our thoughts, His affections can come into our affections, so that we, being connected with Him, will have our own lives made beautiful, just as the fountain is made beautiful when the waters come through. And other people will be helped by seeing us, just as people are helped and made happy by seeing the fountain when the cool, clear waters flow.

XV

THE POLICEMAN AND THE CAT

IN New York City, on the great avenues there are tall signal towers rising high above the street. In these towers policemen stand and turn on and off the big electric signal lights which shine from the tower. When they turn on the green light, it means that all the automobiles and wagons and trucks can move up and down the avenue; but when the red light is turned on, then everything which is moving must stop and wait while all the people and automobiles on the cross streets, who want to go back and forth across the avenue, may have their turn.

But one day something surprising happened on Fifth Avenue, which is the greatest and most crowded street of all. The green lights were shining, and all the traffic was pouring up and down the avenue, and it would have been as much as any one's life was worth to try to get across in the midst of it. Then, all of a sudden, a policeman down in the middle of the street at one of the corners held up his hand. The automobiles threw on their brakes, and there was a screeching and sliding of wheels coming to a sudden stop, and

every one wondered what had happened. Was there a fire engine coming which must have the right of way so that it could go dashing to a fire? —or was it an ambulance which must have a clear way so that it might get quickly to some one who was sick or hurt? But no, there was no fire engine in sight, or ambulance either. Then the people looked closer, and what do you suppose they saw? There was a cat with two kittens which she was trying to carry across the street. The policeman had seen her and was afraid she might be run over by one of the automobiles, so he stopped them all. The cat took one kitten across the street and left it on the other side, then trotted back for the other kitten and carried that one in her mouth safely over also. Then the policeman smiled and waved his hand, and all the traffic started up again.

Furthermore, nobody was sorry, but everybody was glad. They were surprised when all of a sudden they had to stop, but when they saw what they were stopping for, they smiled too, and liked the policeman for what he did. For the policeman had an idea of the kind of thing that should have the right of way. All those automobiles and taxicabs and omnibuses might be in a hurry, but they could afford to stop and wait a minute or two. The cat had to take care of her kittens, and the policeman was determined she should have the chance. The cat was not going to a bank, or

hurrying somewhere to make money, or going shopping, or doing any of the other things which the people riding on the avenue were busy about and might think so important. But she was taking care of the little kittens which would be helpless without her, and the policeman saw that when the cat was being so good to her kittens, it was just as well for the people to be good to the cat. People who had so much business on hand and were hurrying to do it, could afford to stop simply for the sake of kindness. For a little while on the avenue nothing but just kindness would have the right of way.

It would be a good thing if a great many other people could learn to have the same right idea as the big-hearted smiling policeman. Sometimes we get the wrong notion of the things which we imagine always to be the most important. We go hurrying here and there with our faces all screwed up with determination to get something done which concerns us, and to get there ahead of somebody else. We think what we want so important that nothing must stop us on the way. But the policeman was right when he saw that it is always good to stop long enough to be kind. Nobody will be hurt by letting his own hurry come to a halt while he helps something which is weak, and gives a chance to something which otherwise might not have a fair chance, whether it be an animal or whether it be a little boy or girl that is almost

lost in the crowd. All the roads and streets of this world of ours would be nicer places if there were more people like the policeman with the quick eye and the big heart to make sure that kindness should have the right of way.

XVI

"SHARE YOUR FLOWERS"

ONE day in a railroad station I saw a picture poster which I liked so much that I went to the people who had put it there and asked them if they would not give me one like it. They did; and I wish I could show it to the boys and girls who may read this book. Since I cannot do that, the next best thing is to tell you what it was.

It was a picture of a little girl sitting in a hospital bed, and there in the window by her was a vase of lovely flowers. The light was streaming upon them, and in the picture you hardly knew which was the prettier sight, the flowers with all their fresh colour or the child's happy face.

Over the picture were these words in big letters:

SHARE YOUR FLOWERS

And then down at the bottom other printed words told you that any flowers you had might be left at such-and-such a place, and they would be sent to make sick people in the hospitals happy.

"SHARE YOUR FLOWERS." What a nice idea that was, and how many people there are who

never happen to think of it. Perhaps they are sick themselves, or they have a birthday, or Easter Day comes round, and their friends send them many lovely flowers. They keep them all for themselves, and it never occurs to them that they might keep only a few and send the others where they would make more people happy. On the other hand, I knew a little girl once who always celebrated her birthday by going to a big near-by hospital for crippled children. Her mother's birthday present to her, and the one which she liked best, was to have a party for the children there in the hospital wards. She would spend the birthday money her mother had given her for flowers and toys which she took to the little children there. Some of them were lying flat in their beds, some had their arms or their legs strapped up with wooden splints and sometimes with pulleys and heavy weights that dragged upon a bone which had to be kept straight, and made at last to mend. Some of them could sit in wheel chairs or hobble about a little. All of them had pain now and then, and sometimes they would grow very tired of being in the hospital. But on the day when the little girl came with her birthday party, which she gave for these other children instead of for herself, then all of them were glad. They forgot the arms and legs which hurt, they forgot they had been in the hospital a long time, they only thought of the flowers and toys, and their eyes

shone and they had the happiest sort of a time; and the little girl who had brought her birthday to the hospital had the happiest time of all.

She was sharing her flowers, and so can we. We can share our flowers even when we may not have roses and lilies and other fragrant growing things. Every time we share any happiness whatever, it is like sharing flowers, because we pass on to others the lovely, fragrant kindness which has made us glad. When some one has been good to us we must try to be good to others. When some one has made us happy we must show our thankfulness by making others happy. "Freely ye have received, freely give," were the words of Jesus, and "Share your flowers" is another way of saying the same thing.

XVII

TRAMPS

ONCE upon a time a man, as he was going along a country road on a summer's day, met another man. He said "Good-morning" to this other man, and the other man said "Good-morning" to him, and they both stopped and rested a moment on a stone wall by the roadside, and looked out over the pleasant fields and the open country. As they talked together, it became plain that one of the men was a tramp. He did not live anywhere particularly, he did not have anything to do. He simply wandered here and there, getting food from any one who would give it to him, and doing odd jobs only when he had to in order to live at all. After a while the tramp got up, and started along the road. "Well, I must be going on my way," said he. "But how do you know which is your way," said the other man, "when you have not anywhere especially to go?" "Oh, that is easy," said the tramp. "I always go the way the wind is blowing."

When the tramp said that, he showed exactly what it was that made him a tramp. He would go the way the wind was blowing. That is, he

would go the easy way. He did not like to push against anything which forced him to make an effort, not even against the wind. He was for the direction in which the weather would be pleasantest, no matter where it led.

Sometimes boys and girls will need to stop and think, lest they too should imitate the tramp. They may not be like the tramp in having ragged clothes or in wandering along the open roads, but they may have tramp minds and tramp spirits. They may fall, as the tramp did, into the habit of always going the way the wind is blowing. They go with the winds of popularity, or the winds of fashion. If everybody else is doing a certain thing, they do it too, no matter where it leads. If boys in their school cheat at their lessons or at their examinations, they think it is easier to go with this wind than against it. If the girls they know have habits which do not lead in the right direction, nevertheless they will try those habits too, and walk with the wind instead of turning squarely around and bravely facing the other way. So, after a while, they may lose the power of going against the wind at all. They will drift along with whatever influence blows upon them, without ever stopping clearly to think and to determine where it is they go.

One of the most wonderful books which has ever been written in our English language, and which has been read, probably, by as many people as any

other book except the Bible itself, is the fine old story of "Pilgrim's Progress." It tells about a man named Christian who set out through all the difficulties of this world to find the City of God. As he was journeying on his road he met a man called Mr. By-ends, who said, "It is true we somewhat differ in religion from those of the stricter sort, yet but in two small points: first, we never strive against wind and tide; secondly, we are always most zealous when religion goes in his silver slippers; we love much to walk with him in the street, if the sun shines, and people applaud him."

But Christian said to Mr. By-ends, "If you will go with us, you must go against the wind and tide; the which, I perceive, is against your opinion; you must also own religion in his rags, as well as when in his silver slippers; and stand by him, too, when bound in irons, as well as when he walketh the streets with applause."

Mr. By-ends was like the tramp. He wanted to go only in the way the wind was blowing. He did not want to be good, unless goodness should be easy. He did not want to be religious, unless religion was the fashion of the day. But Christian knew better than that. He knew that any one who was content to be only a tramp could never come to the Beautiful City of the glories of God. It was not long before Mr. By-ends had fallen out of the journey altogether, and Christian went on alone. He was to come, at length, to the place where he

wanted to be; not because he went with the wind, but because he was brave enough to go against it; and not because he looked for the easy road, but because he was willing to fight through all sorts of difficulties, in order to keep steadily on by that road which would bring him to his heart's desire.

XVIII

HOW TO MAKE THE GOOD THINGS GROW.

IN front of a house I know there is a lawn, or what ought to be a lawn, and the people who live there were very anxious to make the lawn look beautiful. One autumn day I went past, and this is what I saw. The lawn was being dug up by a man with a spade. The grass which had been there before had been destroyed. All you could see were lumps of raw, brown dirt. What a silly way, we might have said, to make a lawn! How could anything beautiful come out of that dug-up ugliness?

Yet the people who lived in the house and the gardener with the spade knew what they were doing. For the trouble with the lawn was that the grass which had been there before was not soft and pretty grass. Instead, the lawn had begun to be overrun with wire-grass, a thick, tough grass, which is coarse and ugly and which spreads so that presently it kills the good grass altogether. So the first thing which had to be done, even though it took much trouble, was to dig up all the ground, so that the roots of the wire-grass might be de-

stroyed and the wire-grass raked up and thrown away.

Even yet, though, the lawn was not ready to be beautiful. It must be fertilized. Lime had to be spread all over it, in a white, powdery dust, until the ground looked as though it might have the leprosy. It was queerer looking and almost uglier than it had been when it was all brown clods.

But gradually the lime would sink into the ground and give to the earth the help it needed, so that it would be the kind of earth in which presently seeds would grow. And then at length, when the spring came, the new grass seed, the best and cleanest that could be had, would be sown in the ground which had so patiently been made ready, and then at last the real lawn, green and beautiful, might be won.

If it takes that much pains to make a lawn, mustn't we suppose that it takes also much pains to make a life? If our characters are to be beautiful, we must be ready to go to some trouble to make them so.

Suppose, to begin with, that some mean habit has got into our hearts, as the wire-grass gets into the lawn. It is coarse and ugly; but it may also be tough and dangerous. The wrong thing is not content to stay off in one little corner of our life. It will try to spread and crowd the goodness altogether out. A boy hears at school some dirty

story. Instead of putting it out of his mind with disgust, perhaps he begins to think about it and to take pleasure in it. Then the next day he may want to listen to more of the same kind, until presently his whole mind is being overrun by the wire-grass of that kind of evil. Or a girl hears one day some ill-natured gossip about a friend of hers. In her heart she knows that it is not so. She knows that she ought to deny it and to refuse indignantly to listen to it. But instead of that, she does listen, and perhaps she tells it to some one else, and then the ugly false idea begins to overrun all the field of her friendship and destroy its sweetness. Bad thoughts, bad wishes, and bad habits, like the wire-grass, have a way of thrusting their tough roots wide and deep. Then the only thing to do is to destroy them. It will not be easy,—any more than it is easy for a gardener to dig all day, probably with sore muscles and a lame back, to cut the roots of the wire-grass. But it is worth his trouble, and the same sort of thing is worth ours. Boys and girls who really count are the ones who, when they see the roots of wrong things getting a lodgment in their lives, are brave enough to say deliberately, "This thing must be got rid of by cutting it up at the roots, and that is what I am going to do."

But then, if the good seeds of the thoughts of God are to grow in our minds and hearts, we must make the ground ready. Sometimes we wonder

what is the use of going to Sunday school and what is the use of going to church. It may be we forget most of the lessons we study. It may be that we cannot tell a week from now exactly what we heard in church this Sunday. Nevertheless, the lessons we learn and the words we hear and the prayers we say are like the things that the gardener puts upon the ground to fertilize and sweeten it. You may not be able to see after a while that he put anything there. Gradually it disappears, and you would not know that anything had happened. But the ground knows, and our minds and hearts likewise know that something has happened through all that we have learned and listened to of good and sweet suggestions, when the time comes to see whether or not the seed of the plans of God will grow.

So finally, with us as with the ground, there comes the springtime. You remember Jesus' parable of the sower. The seed is the word of God, and the will of God. God does not want our lives to be barren. He wants us to let Him sow in us the seed of the kind of beauty and grace which He knows we are able to develop. And if truly we have prepared the ground of our minds and hearts for this seed of His plans for us, then that seed will surely grow.

XIX

PAINTING THE SKIES

THERE is a lovely story of a little girl who was sitting with her mother at a window one evening when the sun went down. She looked out at the sky all glowing with the colours of the sunset. The clouds were edged with fiery gold, and the changing colours came and went across the sky,—in violet, and pink, and purple, and in all that beauty which every one of us has seen on some bright summer's evening and which no one in the world can quite put down in words. As the little girl watched it, she said to her mother, "I wish that I could help God paint the sky."

Then this is what her mother answered. "Dearest, you do help God paint the sky. You paint the sky of your mother's heart every day."

What do you suppose she meant by that? Our hearts are inside us, and how can a heart have a sky? If it did, how could we paint it? We certainly could not take a paint brush and get inside other persons and put colours on their hearts, and if we could, we should doubt if that would make them feel any better.

But this is what the little girl's mother meant. We know how it is when the weather changes in

the sky above us. One day there comes a storm, and the whole world seems dark and gloomy and threatening, and we feel a little uneasy and depressed. Then another time all the sky is shining with the sun, or beautiful with the lovely colours of the evening, and we look at it and feel the happier and brighter for such a lovely sight. And when we talk of our hearts, we talk of them as though they were the place where our feelings live; and whenever we are gloomy it is just as though our hearts were living under a dark sky, and whenever we are glad, it is as though our hearts were living under a sky which is shining and bright. So the little girl's mother meant that her own heart was the brighter because her little girl brought so much happiness into her life. She was the kind of girl who would come in to her mother one day with her face aglow with a look that showed that she had been doing a kindness for some one else—had finished, perhaps, a toy for her small brother or sister, or had remembered some one's birthday, or had brought her mother a flower out of a garden. Because of the kind of girl she was, every time her mother looked at her it was as though the sun shone and the colours glowed in a sky above her heart. The little girl was helping God paint that sky of her mother's happiness every day.

How would you like to paint the skies of people's hearts in that same way?

beyond the hills, and his hopes were high, and his faith was strong, as to what he should do when he went out into that bigger world.

Also he was VIGOROUS. That means that he was strong, with all the muscles of his body fit and keen. He had worked hard. Sometimes he had fought hard too. The pastures and the hills were not always safe places. Wild beasts lurked among the rocks. Sometimes they would spring upon the sheep. Then the boy would trust to his own courage and his strength to drive them away.

Furthermore he was INDEPENDENT. He did not take his thoughts or his ideas at second-hand. He had some brothers who were older than he. They were not especially remarkable men. They may have been as brave and useful as the average, but no more so. But this lad did not suppose that he must stop merely with being what his brothers were. He had a way of his own and a will of his own to do the very best that he himself could do.

And so, because of all these things, he was DARING. There came one great day when he should prove that. His elder brothers were in the army, and his father sent him down from the farm to see how his brothers were and to carry them some food. When he came to the army, there was a great commotion. It seemed that a huge soldier from the enemy army had come out into the space between the lines and dared any man to come out and fight him single-handed. Nobody in

the army to which this lad's brothers belonged dared to take up the challenge. But he dared. He had just happened to come that day, a lad straight from the hills. He did not know much about armies, but he was not afraid. He said he did not need any sword, nor helmet, nor armour neither, such as men in those times wore. He took a sling, which as a shepherd he had used to fight off wild animals. He picked up five small stones out of a brook. He went out to meet the huge boaster from the other army, and the first stone that he threw struck him in the forehead, and down he went defeated.

And now you see who it was of whom I have been talking. The words with which I have described him gave his name, and doubtless you have guessed his name already, for this person who was

Dutiful
Ambitious
Vigorous
Independent, and
Daring

was none other than DAVID.

You have read the story of David as the old book of Samuel tells it to us in our Old Testament. Go now and read it again by yourself, for it is the kind of story which can make each one of us feel the better and the braver for the reading. And when we think of this lad who became such a hero

that his name has come down to us like the sound of a trumpet across all the long, long years, we may well think of what the five letters of his name help us to remember.

We must learn to do our duty faithfully, whatever that duty be.

We must be ambitious to do little things so well that presently we can do the big things worthily.

We must keep our bodies vigorous.

And our spirits independent.

And so, when the chance comes for some fine act of courage or of helpfulness which others shrink from, we shall be daring to do what others dare not do.

XXII

GOOD NEWS

THERE is a story in the Old Testament which all boys and girls ought to know about, and especially the girls, because it is about a girl.

A long time ago there was a man named Naaman, and he had a dreadful disease called leprosy. Generally none who ever had leprosy got well, but little by little the disease went on while all their body turned to ghastly white, and at length they died because no one knew how to help them. And one of the worst things about it was that other people were afraid of catching leprosy from any man who had it, so that after a while he would have to stay away from every one and cry "Unclean" whenever he saw well persons coming near him, so that he might warn them away.

Now, Naaman had the leprosy, and the fact that he was a great man and powerful could not make up for that one dreadful thing. What he would have given everything else for was to have his leprosy taken away.

At length it was taken away, and it all came about through a little girl, and a slave girl at that.

She had been captured from the land of Israel, and she was the maid who waited on Naaman's wife. One day she came to her mistress, and she told her mistress of a prophet, a man of God, who lived in Samaria, and she said that she believed that this man of God would know how to cure Naaman of his leprosy. So Naaman's wife told Naaman what the little girl had said, and Naaman had his chariot harnessed and went down with a letter from the king himself to the prophet. But he did not need the king's letter. The word of the little girl who knew of him was enough, and the prophet healed Naaman and made him all whole and sound again.

Suppose the little girl had forgotten all about the prophet. She had heard of him in years before. But there are a great many of us who hear of wonderful things and do not remember them. Sometimes it looks as though we remembered the disagreeable things. We remember when things do not go to suit us. But we take it for granted, and then forget it altogether, when God's goodness has been breaking out all around us in happy days. But the little girl remembered the bright thing. She was a captive, but God was reigning nevertheless if God had a man who was filled with His spirit and could do wonderful things.

Then, in the second place, she told the helpful thing she knew. Suppose she had said to herself, "Why should I tell Mrs. Naaman how Mr. Naaman can be healed? I do not owe him any kind-

ness. Why should I let him know at all?" But that was not what she said. She was too generous-hearted for that. The only thing she seemed to think of was to make known as quickly as she could the wonderful secret which she knew. And when Naaman came back from his visit all clean and well again, he and all his friends were rejoicing, and I think the little girl perhaps was happiest of all.

The little girl knew the good news about the prophet. But you and I know of some one much more wonderful than the prophet was. We know about Jesus Christ. To-day, just as in the years long ago, He will give His help to those who ask Him. He will make our hearts clean again with His forgiveness when we have done wrong. He will make us strong when we have been weak. He will make our lives bright and glad when they have been moping and indifferent. And if we know this, we ought to tell others, just as the little girl told others what she knew about the prophet. The other day I read a book in which a man who is now a missionary described what happened to him the first day he ever preached a sermon. He went into the pulpit, and he had spoken only three or four sentences when he began to blush and stammer, and then he stopped stock-still, for he had forgotten every word he meant to say. At length he blurted out, "Friends, I am very sorry, but I have forgotten my sermon." Down the steps

of the pulpit he came in shame and confusion. But then of a sudden it was as though a Voice spoke to him, and the Voice asked, "Haven't I done anything for you?"

"Yes," he replied, "you have done everything for me."

"Well," asked the Voice, "couldn't you tell that?"

"I suppose I could," he replied very eagerly, and instead of going to his seat, he went round to the front of the pulpit and said, "Friends, I see I cannot preach, but I love Jesus Christ. You know what my life was in this community, and you know what it is now. You know He has made life new for me, and though I cannot preach, I am determined to love and serve Him."

From that day to this, he has been telling people just that. He has been helping them to know that the dear Lord Christ would make their lives over too. He has been spreading everywhere the good news. If you and I do that by what we say, and by the way we look, and by the way we live, then there will be more boys and girls in Sunday school and more people in the church.

XXIII

HARD-SCRAMBLE HILL

ONE summer, away up in Maine, I was going to a church where I had to preach on a Sunday morning, and I had hired a man who had an automobile to take me there. On we drove over a road which was mostly level, along the blue waters of a bay. But presently we came to a hill. It was a most surprising hill for a respectable road to find in its way. It seemed to go up like a ladder. It looked as though it were made for mountain goats and not for automobiles. The road was washed and gullied on that hill, and no wonder, for it looked as though all the dirt would slide off of itself. All rock the road was, from the bottom of the hill to the top—rough rock and uneven. Up went the automobile, creaking and grinding, bumping all ways at once. The engine had to struggle its hardest to pull at all. And in the midst of the climb the man who was driving the automobile said to me, "This is hard-scramble hill." I believed him. That hill had the right name.

But up and over the hill the automobile went. And at the top it seemed to shake itself a little as

though the four wheels would discover if they were all there, and it went on as well as ever. When we had got to the top of the hill and looked back, it did not seem nearly as steep as it looked from the bottom. That is a funny thing about hills. They never do.

Suppose now that at the bottom of the hill the man who was driving the automobile had said—as he might have said from the look of things—"That hill just cannot be got over. It is too hard and rough even to try, and we will turn around and go back where we started from." Then I should certainly not have reached the place where I needed to be. And, for all I know, the people who were expecting me might have been waiting there yet.

For there was no way to get round the hill. Water was on one side of it, and fields with rock fences and trees on the other. You had to go OVER the hill if you ever expected to reach all that lay on the other side.

That is the way it often is in this world of ours. There in front of us are the steep, rough hills of difficulty over which the road insists on running. There are the difficulties which boys and girls find at school, the particular lessons which they hate because they are hard, the examples in arithmetic and algebra which they cannot do, the exercises on the piano which it seems to them that nobody's fingers could ever be quick and clever enough to

get over. There are hills in the way too when school is over, hills of the hard work which the weak-kneed may flinch from, hills which call all the muscle of mind and spirit to a steep climb before the rewards of success on the other side can ever be won. These are the "hard-scramble hills," and when we first see them, we may not like them, but there they are. We cannot go round them. And the only thing is to go over them if we want to win all that lies on the other side. Then when we have faced the climb and finished it, we shall know that it was never as bad as we thought at first. We can go ahead with a whistle and a song and a merry heart, for we are high up in the sunlight on the top of "hard-scramble hill."

XXIV

BOYS AND GIRLS AND A DOG

I KNOW a family of boys and girls in which, if a vote were taken as to the best-behaved member of the family, there might be a surprising result. For very possibly these children might agree that the best-behaved member in that house is not the oldest, but the newest. He is quite small, and very wiggly and playful. He is black,—so black that in the dark you cannot see him at all. He patters about on four feet instead of on two. He is a little, curly-haired, black dog.

I said that all the boys and girls in the family would probably vote that he is the best-behaved person in the house, and these are the reasons why.

To begin with, he never comes down grumpy to breakfast. Of course nice boys and girls don't often do that either, but sometimes if they happen to get out of bed the wrong way, they do. The little dog, though, is never grumpy. Whether the day is cloudy or bright, he is always the same. He wags his tail and jumps about, and looks as though he were trying to say in his dog language: "Good-morning. Aren't you glad that we are all starting another day together?"

Moreover, this little dog never says that he will not play with you unless you play his way. Even the best boys and girls sometimes will hang back or even sulk a little if the others will not play the game they like best. But the dog will be as happy in one game as in another. He is always ready to join in the fun, whatever it may be.

And he is always good-natured. He doesn't snap, or bite, or growl, when the children pull him about. He is friendly with everybody. When people come into the house he acts as though he thought they were going to be nice people, and treats them that way. And so, because of that and because of the other reasons I have told you, the boys and girls would probably say that in some ways at least, the little black dog is better behaved than they are themselves, and that there are fine lessons which they can learn,—and do learn, from him.

The smallest boy one day was looking at the dog, and he began to wish that he could look as cheerful as the dog did. "I wish I had a tail to wag," he said.

But after all, boys and girls have other and even better ways of showing their happy spirit than a little dog. The dog cannot speak, but they can. They have tongues which can make words and gentle, lovely speech. Suppose every child should make his tongue wag in the way that always would be friendly. We know we don't always do that.

Sometimes the tongue is twisted into ugly, snarling words, but it can equally be made to tinkle and dance with laughter, and cheerfulness, and kindness. Then the boys and girls could make other people even more glad than the little black dog makes them now.

In the wise old Book of Proverbs in our Bible there is a good text which we might remember. It says, "A merry heart doeth good like medicine." That means that when the heart is merry within it helps everybody like a pleasant tonic. It makes them feel happier and stronger. Wouldn't that be a fine way for all of us to make other people feel?

XXV

LIGHT, HEAT, AND POWER

PROBABLY all the boys and girls who read this book have heard of Thomas A. Edison, who is often called the "Wizard" because he is such a great inventor. Year after year he works in his laboratories, and many of the things we are familiar with and use every day, like the phonograph, for example, or like the bulbs which give us electric light, are due to his work and his discoveries. In one of our greatest cities there is what is called the Edison Company. Once I saw a big picture which was the advertisement of that company. It showed three little elflike men who were coming, like servants of the "Wizard," to bring three gifts to all who wanted them. One brought light, the second brought heat, and the third brought power.

Light first. Think how wonderful electricity would be even if this one gift were the only one it gave. Long ago people used to have little stone lamps with clumsy wicks made of twisted threads and melted fat for fuel, and the smoky flame of lights like these was only a tiny glimmer in the midst of the dark. Then for a long time more the best light people had was candles; and it seemed a

big improvement when kerosene oil first came in. But now, instead of oil lamps, in thousands and thousands of houses where people live, there are clean little glass bulbs instead. The electric current makes the light which shines through these, and makes the light in the great signs on the city streets, so that it turns the night into a blaze which is almost as bright as day.

In the second place, electricity furnishes heat. Some people cook with electric stoves. They don't have to have coal, or gas, or wood, or any other kind of fuel. All they need to do is to turn a switch, and the electric current flows in through the coils of wire in the stove, and presently these are glowing with a burning heat. People use electricity also in all sorts of other smaller things,—in the little rack which will brown the toast on the breakfast table, in pads that can be used for sick people instead of hot-water bottles, under teakettles where the tea may be quickly boiled without a stove, and in dozens and dozens of other ways that we need not stop to count.

And most remarkable of all, that great electric company will send out power. By a current which it sends flooding through its cables it will set ten thousand wheels in motion, from the small electric fan which cools a room to the roaring wheels which carry the subway trains and the electric locomotives which nowadays are being more and more used on great railroads in our land.

Light, heat, and power,—all these things this great company will furnish.

And as I looked one day at the advertisement of what electricity could do, I thought it was a good reminder of what religion ought to do and to be. If these lives of ours are really linked up with the great dynamo of the life of God, then we also will have three things.

In the first place we shall have light,—and we shall give light, too. The trouble with a great many people is that they do not have a very clear sort of idea of what is right and what is wrong. They stumble and blunder along into bad ways because they have such foggy notions of what the right ways are. But when the thoughts of God are flowing in the heart of boys and girls, they give light in every group to which they belong. Their brighter conscience is like a clear light in the dark. They help other boys and girls to see where the straight, clean roads of living are.

So religion gives us also heat. At least, it ought to, and it always will if we want it to. Sometimes you say of such and such a person, "He is cold-hearted." If that is true, then it is certain that he has no real religion, for the kind of religion which Jesus came to teach us must make our hearts warm with courtesy and kindness and the desire to make others glad. If a church is a chilly sort of place, with no welcome in it for strangers, where all the people look stiff and disagreeable, you may be sure

that even that church has not found out what religion means. But when some one meets you at the church door with a smile and gives you welcome, and when in the singing of the hymns and in the prayers you feel that people's hearts are warm with love of God and with friendship for each other, then you understand how it is that, just as electricity brings heat to houses, so the great current of religion brings heat to people's hearts, to make them all aglow.

Finally, it brings power. The greatest men who have ever lived have been religious men. The twelve apostles of Jesus began just as ordinary fishermen and men of other simple occupations. But Jesus said that He would give them power from on high, and He did. St. Paul went out across the world and preached the Gospel so mightily that the history of whole nations has been different ever since. Once when he and his companions were in a city in Greece, people said of them: "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." From that time to this the power of religion has been making things over and making them better. If you and I want to be strong, then the great sure way is to let the thoughts of God and the will of God flow into us. Then we can have our part in turning our world upside down, and leaving it right side up to God.

XXVI

THE THING THAT STOPPED THE SUBWAYS

IN the city of New York there are great tunnels under some of the streets called subways. Through these subways, trains of steel cars run by electricity and tens of thousands of people ride back and forth on them every day. In the morning when the schools are opening and work is beginning, you may see the people pouring down like a flood into subway stations by the thousands, and again at evening, when the day's work is done and they are going home. The subways not only run deep beneath the streets, but in some places they are dug even down under the rivers, so that people may ride from New York to Brooklyn through the tunnel with the water and the ships up there above their heads.

One day at the busiest hour of the morning, when the subway trains were flying and more people than you could count were riding in them, all of a sudden the trains everywhere began to slow down until they were only crawling along, and at length they stopped altogether. Some of them happened to stop at the stations, but most of them had to stop in the tunnels between the stations, or

even in the long tunnel under the river itself, and there the people had to sit and wait for a long, long time, not knowing what had happened or what was the matter.

And what do you suppose was the matter? What was it that had stopped all those great steel trains which had been rushing along, had slowed them down, and brought every one of them to a halt? What could be strong enough to do all that?

Here is the answer, and you will be surprised. One RAT. One single rat had done it all!

This is the way it happened. Over on the river is the huge power-plant which makes the electricity that runs the trains in all the subways. There the flashing wheels and dynamos turn day and night to make the current which gives power to the trains. But a rat had gnawed the covering of the fine wires wound round the thing that is called the generator in one of the dynamos. And when the covering was gnawed through, the electricity leaped out like a flame, and melted all the rest of the wires so that the great machine for the time was ruined, and all the working of the power-house came to a stop. If anybody had asked you beforehand, "Can one rat stop all the subway trains?" you would have laughed. It would have seemed ridiculous. But one rat in the wrong place did.

That is the way it is sometimes with the little sins. They do not seem to be big or important. Some-

times we laugh when our father or mother, or some older person, tells us to have an eye to them, for they might do so great damage. We feel so big and strong and confident. What harm will one little evil thought do? What harm will one little lie do, crawling along where nobody knows about it? But the trouble is that some day that little evil thing may get into the power-house of our conscience and may begin to gnaw there. And then there will be a flare-up, and all the wheels of our best strength come to a stop, and we cannot do anything until we have got rid of that little slight sin, and made ourselves right again.

David in the Old Testament prayed once, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." After the rat stopped the dynamo and halted all the subway trains, the people in the power-house were doubtless more careful than ever before to keep rats out; and we must keep out of the house of our heart the little crawling, evil things, which do more damage than we ever guess if once they get inside.

XXVII

FOUNDATIONS WHICH CAN LAST

ON my desk at home I have a wooden paper-cutter which I value very much. That is not because it is especially pretty, for it is made of old, dark wood with edges which have grown rough through the years. The reason I value it is not most because of the way it looks but because of what it is and where it came from. On it are cut these words: "Winchester Cathedral Foundation Oak." Some day if you go to England you will see Winchester Cathedral, one of the greatest and most beautiful churches in all that old, old land. Far back in 1202 the Cathedral began to be built and its foundations laid,—more than seven hundred years ago. Through all these centuries the Cathedral has stood there, and generation after generation of men and women have gone in and out of its doors and down its great aisles to worship. But not long ago men were amazed and startled to find that there were cracks in the Cathedral wall. They set to work to examine it and they found that something was wrong with the foundations. The Cathedral was settling into the earth, and if something was not done, perhaps be-

fore long its walls and roof might collapse altogether.

So down they went into the earth to dig and to examine what was underneath the walls. They discovered that in the long-ago years when the Cathedral was built, its builders had driven heavy piles of oak deep down into the earth and on these they had laid the walls. Doubtless they thought that oak was strong enough, and that it would last so long that nobody would ever need to trouble about it. But as the years went by, the low wet soil beneath the Cathedral rotted the oak, and some of it began to crumble. And therefore, with infinite labour, men, working sometimes in divers' suits down in the mud and water of the boggy foundations, had to take out the oak little by little and put stone in its place.

Doubtless the men who were doing that realized as they never had before that one cannot be too careful to lay the right foundations for anything which is going to endure. Oak had seemed very good, but even oak was not good enough. It lasted for hundreds of years, but the time came when it failed and would not hold up the great Cathedral any more. Stone was the only thing that would do. It would have been the best thing to use in the beginning. It was the thing that had to be used in the end.

When you and I are building the house of the character which we live in we may well remember

that. St. Paul said to all Christian people, "The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." And he said, "For other foundation can no man lay than . . . Jesus Christ." If we want all the things which we hope to accomplish to be builded, like a great Cathedral, to last forever, then we must have the thoughts of Jesus Christ for our foundation. If we say, "What is the thing that most people round me are thinking? What is popular, or what will make me rich?" and then try to build on THAT foundation, one of these days the foundation will crumble and all that we have done will commence to crack and go to pieces. But if first of all and underneath all we are trying steadily to think of what the Lord Jesus would say and of what He would want, and to build all our choices on THAT foundation, then the great walls of character and example which we shall raise will be so strong and true that they will stand forever.

XXVIII

THE COST OF CARELESSNESS

IN a railroad train one day I saw this sign put up in big letters at the end of the car:

ONE MOMENT OF CARELESSNESS MAY COST A LIFETIME OF REGRET

That is something for all who ride on a train to think about,—for the conductor and the engineer and the fireman first of all. One day not long ago on the edge of a great city, a train on an elevated railway was coming into a station close behind another one. The engineer dropped his glove, and because the station meant the end of his run and he was in a hurry to get out of the engine and start home, he stooped down quickly to pick up his glove. While he was stooping down, his train went round a curve and there, just ahead of it, was the rear end of another train standing on the track. But he, with his head bent over, did not see it, and his train crashed into the other train and many people were badly injured. It was only one little minute of carelessness, but it will mean many lifetimes of regret for him and for the people whom his carelessness has crippled.

Those who ride on trains as passengers also may take foolish chances. They may jump on the platform while the train is moving, or lean far out of the window and run the danger of being struck by the side of a bridge or an embankment or by something else to which the train runs very close. Only one little minute of carelessness can make all the difference between a whole body, full of life and happiness, and one that is hurt and maimed for all the rest of its days.

Yet it is not only with regard to railroads that the sign is a good one to remember. "ONE MINUTE *of carelessness may mean a lifetime of regret*" in other ways also. A boy lets go of his temper, throws something at another boy and hurts him so that he will never fully recover from it; or a girl in a fit of petulance tells some poisoned piece of untrue gossip which injures her friend, and the friendship that once was happy and beautiful can never be the same again. The little mistakes and the little recklessnesses are worth watching out for. "One minute of carelessness may mean a lifetime of regret"; and the lifetimes of joy and satisfaction are made up just of the ordinary minutes in which we were careful of what we were doing so that we may not have reason afterward to be ashamed.

XXIX

WHERE THE HURT GOES

ONCE there was a little boy who had done a very wrong thing, which made all those who loved him sorry and ashamed. So his mother brought him into a room alone with her, and in her hand she had the lash of a whip. She said, "My son, you have done something that is very wrong, and whenever any one does what is wrong, suffering is certain to follow. There cannot be evil things without there being pain and hurt as their result." Then she gave the boy the whip-lash, and held out her own hand. "You must take this whip," she said, "and cut me with it as hard as you can across my hand, for perhaps that will show you, and help you next time to remember, that you cannot do any wrong thing of which your mother would be ashamed, without your mother being hurt."

The boy did not expect anything like that. He had thought, of course, that the whip-lash in his mother's hand was to punish him. He could have stood being cut with it himself. It would have hurt him, and he would have hated the pain, but he would have shut his teeth in a defiant way and

have tried to keep from showing his mother that he cared. But here was a new idea which he could not endure. To hurt his mother instead of being hurt himself, to punish her instead of having her punish him—that was something he had never thought of, and he burst into tears to know that this was really what he had to do.

That day his mother was teaching him a truth which he would never forget again. None of us can do wrong and truly think it is nobody's business but our own. Sometimes boys and girls, and men and women too, do imagine that, but it is false. They say, "Yes, I know that I have chosen to do something which was evil, because I wanted to do it; but I am willing to take my punishment and that is all there is to it." But that is not all. The punishment does not stop with us. It is bound to fall on those who love us. The boy who is deliberately lazy at school, who will not study his lessons, and then, perhaps, at examination time does some dishonest thing to cover up what he does not know, may be punished at school; but that is not where the keenest punishment is. His father, who had trusted him, must go out among his friends ashamed to think that his boy, of whom he wanted to be proud, will be looked down upon and distrusted. A girl speaks some cruel slander of some other girl, and she may be punished by the resentment of her own companions, but that is not the end of the punishment. Her mother

must be punished in the thought that her daughter has been so different from the kind of girl she wanted her to be. The punishment always falls where there is the truest and most unselfish love. Just as the mother of whom I told you about carried away on her hand the red mark of the whip, so all mothers and fathers who love their boys and girls carry on their hearts the scars of pain, which hurt as whip-lashes do, whenever their boys or girls have done any evil thing.

It is the remembrance of that which will most surely make us want to be good. Jesus knew it; and the way in which He came to save us was to show us how forever the love of God must suffer when we sin, and so help us to be ashamed of hurting Him Who loves us best of all. Jesus did not come into the world to punish people. He came to take their punishment upon Himself. He was the truest and most loving one who had ever lived, and just because there was so much cowardice and hate and falsehood in men's hearts, men hated Him, and at last they killed Him. He did not strike back. He went to His cross and suffered and died, in order that presently men might wake up to see how terrible was the evil which had made them treat the love of Jesus so. They would understand that their sins had made Him suffer. Then they would be ashamed and repentant in the face of such a love as His.

You remember the fine old hymn which sometimes we sing:

"There is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified
Who died to save us all.

"We may not know, we cannot tell,
What pains He had to bear,
But we believe it was for us
He hung and suffered there."

So when we think of Jesus we remember that whenever we do wrong we hurt not only our human friends, but that greatest and truest Friend of all. When we are untruthful or cruel or selfish, it is just as though we made a new wound on the hands of Jesus. None of us want to do that. None of us really would do it if we stopped to think. Instead we shall want to live so bravely, so kindly, and so truly in the spirit of Jesus that all our lives shall make Him glad.

XXX

AS THE IVY GROWS

ONCE I had a pot of pretty English ivy,—the ivy with the dark green leaves, such as grows on the old castles and the ancient buildings of the lands across the seas, and grows here in our country too. This pot of it was in the house, and the delicate tendrils climbed up on a green wire frame which was fixed above the pot. It looked very fresh and beautiful against the wall, and I hoped that all the winter it would grow there.

But it didn't grow. Little by little the leaves began to turn brown at the edges, then to turn brown all over, and finally to wither and drop. One by one they fell away until practically none were left, and all the vine was barren and dead.

What was the matter with it? Simply that the ivy would not grow in the house. It was not meant to be shut up within four walls and under a roof. It needed sun, and in the house it got no sun, or at best a very little when the sunbeams slanted occasionally in at the window.

And another thing I think it needed also. It needed the storms. The house was too hot for it and too dry. It was not used to being heated in winter by radiators. It needed instead to be there in the big wind-blown out-of-doors.

As it was with the ivy, so it largely is with people too. You cannot grow boys and girls in shut-in places. They need the sun of the brightness of God. They need to be where His thoughts will shine directly on them. Some people do not know that. There are homes where the father and mother and the children imagine that all they need to do is just to live according to their own ideas. They will do only what they happen to want to do. They forget that it is important to try to bring their own thoughts where the great life-giving thought of God will shine upon them. The older people forget their prayers. Perhaps the boys and girls are not taught to pray, and are not helped to love to. After a while the best growth which they might have had,—growth in kindness, growth in courage, growth in character,—withers and is stunted because they have not had the sunlight of the thought of God.

In a second way, also, people are like the ivy, of which I began to tell you. They must not be so warmed and coddled all the time that their own strength will dry up and die. We do not need to have things always made easy. We need the hard things too. We need the storms. Some day you will want to read the life of David Livingstone, that heroic man who was a great explorer and a great missionary, who first opened up wide regions in central Africa, and went where no one had dared to go before. When he was a little

boy in Scotland he was shaping the character which afterward made him able to do such courageous things, and he was shaping it because things were not always easy, but sometimes were strict and often were difficult. In the little cottage where his family lived, it was his father's custom to lock the door at dusk, by which time all the children were expected to be in the house. One evening David Livingstone had broken the rule, and when he reached the door it was barred. He did not cry or make a disturbance, but having found a piece of bread sat down without complaint to pass the night on the door-step—and he would have done it except that his mother looked out the window and saw him, and brought him in. His father was very poor, so the boy had to work in a factory from six in the morning until eight at night. But he was determined to go to school, no matter how nearly impossible it seemed. You and I know a good many boys and girls who scarcely can be persuaded to study their lessons when they have all day to do it, but David Livingstone, who had to work all day, went to school after eight o'clock at night. And he studied so hard and eagerly that he learned more than most boys do in a very long time. He was growing sturdier every day both in mind and spirit, just because he was not afraid of hardships. Like the ivy, he grew better because he had to face the storms.

XXXI

HOW MANY ROSES-WORTH ARE YOU?

ONE day a lady I know was sick, and a friend of hers sent her some roses. There they were in a vase in the room, very lovely and fragrant, and she was very happy with them. It made her feel better because they were there, and because some one she was fond of had sent them.

But suppose you should have asked what use were the roses anyhow? Why should they make any one feel better? What were the roses good for?

They were not good to eat, that is plain enough. True, sometimes people take rose petals and make them into a kind of candy, but not all people like them, and even if they do, they cannot count on rose petals much for food. They would not satisfy any one who was hungry. They would not make any one well who was sick.

And they are certainly no good to try to keep and exchange for something else. They are not like money which lasts as long as you can hold it, and which you can pass on for whatever you want to buy. Roses will not last. In a day or two,

they will fade and droop, and that apparently is the end of them.

But that is not really the end. For the good that the roses do is something finer than food and finer than money. They are so lovely and so fragrant that somehow just by being themselves they make people happy. Especially when they come as the gift of a friend, they seem to stand for cheerfulness and sweetness, and to bring these with them wherever they are. It is not only that the roses are in the room, it is as though also they were planted in the heart and made all one's thoughts and feelings sweet within.

So just as the person who brings a gift of roses may give to his friend something that is even more valuable than food or money, so when we give even so much as a word of kindness and affection, it is like the rose which may be more precious than all other things. Jesus said it was a great deed if one gave even a cup of cold water to a little child in the name of a disciple. He meant that even such a little thing as that, done in the name of love and with a smile and a gracious word, meant more than anybody could really know. And so it is that the people in this world who may do the most for others are those who bring them the kindnesses and speak the helpful encouraging words which are like a cup of water, or like a rose with the dew upon it.

It would be a good thing for our world if we

could give a new idea as to what makes people really valuable. Sometimes boys and girls have the idea that they would like very much to be rich. They see some one who has a great deal of money, and they think that they would like to have a great deal too. They look at some man in their city who has made a large fortune, and they wish they could be like him. He is worth a million dollars, they say. But suppose he has a million dollars and has no kindness and no love in his heart. Suppose he is stingy in his business, hard toward his friends, disagreeable to his neighbours. Then, though he may be worth a million dollars when it comes to figures in a bank, he is worth next to nothing when it comes to the affections in people's hearts.

The better question, therefore, to ask of ourselves and to ask of others is not how many dollars are we worth, but how many roses are we worth? How much do we know of the way to make life so gracious and fragrant that everybody is the better because we are near?

XXXII

BACK-NIPPIN' ROAD

UP in the northeastern corner of our country there is a land of hills and woods into which the sturdy settlers came long ago when America was new. It has always been a difficult land from which to win a living, for the winters are long, the snow is deep, and the soil is rocky, and it is hard to make good crops grow. So the population is scattered, and in some parts there are even fewer people now than there used to be years ago. They have gone away to the cities, and here and there are houses with their doors closed and the grass growing high around their windows, quite empty and deserted, as though no one had lived there for a long time and as though perhaps no one would ever live there any more.

In that country there is a certain road which leads over a hill, and on it are two houses which have been deserted so long that they are beginning to fall to pieces. The road itself is thick with grass, and so overgrown with bushes and the drooping limbs of trees that one would hardly know a road is there. One day a man who has lived in

that country all his life was asked whether the road had a name. Oh, yes, it had a name. And what do you suppose he said the name was? "Its name," said he, "is Back-Nippin' Road."

"But how did it get such a name as that, and what does it mean?" he was asked.

"Well," said he, "once there were two old people who lived in the two houses on that road. When they were girls, they used to be great friends. But as they grew older, they grew crosser all the time. And whenever they met, they would quarrel. When the neighbours went by, each one of them would tell what she thought of the other, and what with the back-bitin' and back-nippin' that went on all the time, people began to call it 'The Back-Nippin' Road,' and that is the name it goes by to this day."

"The Back-Nippin' Road"! What a bad old sound that has. It is not a nice thing that two old people, who now are dead and gone, should be remembered because they were always saying disagreeable things behind each other's back, "back-bitin' and back-nippin'," as the neighbours called it, until the very road had been named according to the reputation they gave it.

Suppose the streets we live on should be named according to the manners of the people who live on them. Suppose, instead of being called "Main Street" or "First Street" or "Second Street" or "Park Street," or some other name like that which

they do happen to have, they were named according to the way the neighbours saw that we behaved ourselves. What sort of names would our streets have then?

Well, sometimes we lose our tempers, and we begin to criticize everybody around us, and to blame other people for the things we have done wrong ourselves, and to make all the cutting remarks we happen to think of about the people who displease us. Then one day we might look down at the corner, and there would be a new street sign which would say, "This is Sharp-Tongue Street."

Or there are other days when we simply feel grumpy with life generally. We may not say anything unkind about other people. In fact, we do not say anything at all. We only sit still and look miserable. And then down at the corner up goes another sign, "This is Wry-Face Street."

Or suppose that the people who come to us find that we are mean and selfish. Suppose that we want to keep everything we have and to get more, but never to give to those who have less than ourselves. Suppose we are stingy with our money and stingy with our pleasures. Up might go another sign, "This is Close-Fist Street."

Now, none of us would like to live on streets like that, and certainly we should not like to be the ones to give them their names. Nor do we need to give any such names as these to the streets we live on. If we choose, we can live in such a

way that people who want to name the streets after ourselves will have to think of very much nicer words. Wouldn't it be a pleasant thing if some one, walking through our neighbourhood and catching sight of us should say, "This must be Friendly-Face Street," or should see us act so kindly toward our neighbours that he should say "This must be Warm-Heart Street that I have come to."

There is a poem which it is good to remember about a man who saw what a pleasant place a road could be if the one who lived on it tried to make it so. This is what he wished for himself, and this is what we well might wish for ourselves too.

"Let me live in a house by the side of the road,
Where the race of men go by—
The men who are good and the men who are bad,
As good and as bad as I.
I would not sit in the scorner's seat,
Or hurl the cynic's ban;—
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man."

XXXIII

GOODNESS WITH THE BRIGHT FACE

ONCE a little boy was saying his prayers, and a part of the prayer he made was a little surprising. It began, to be sure, in a way that one might perhaps expect. "O Lord," he said, "make all the bad people good." Now of course we do want the Lord to make the bad people good. We want all the cruel people to be made tender and merciful, the people who tell lies to learn to tell the truth, the people who are dishonest to become honest, and the selfish people to learn to be unselfish and thoughtful of others. But that was not the end of the little boy's prayer. "O Lord, make all the bad people good," he said, "*and* make all the good people nice."

Right there this little boy hit upon an idea which all of us would do well to remember. There are bad people in the world, it is true,—though probably not so many as we think, for some of them are only wrong-headed and would rather not be bad if only they knew better. And a good many of these people who are bad stay bad because of the sort of good people they see. Most of the bad ones would very likely be good-er if the good people were nicer.

So one of the things which we all need to learn, supposing that we are already more or less good, or trying to be, is also to be nice. The trouble with the goodness which some people have is that it is not a pleasant kind. Here are boys and girls, for example, who do not do anything particularly wrong. They do not steal, or tell lies, or commit cruel deeds. From their marks in school, you might think that they behaved very well. But all the while they may be grumpy and disagreeable. Perhaps they even come to Sunday school and church on Sunday, and yet do not seem to have learned how to be happy and to make others happy. And there are men and women too who have the same failing. To see them sitting in their pews on Sunday, you might think that they were religious and very good. But if you meet them in the week, they may be as disagreeable and as cross-tempered as a dog who has lost his bone. Religion has not seemed to agree with them, and some of the bad people say, "If the people who are supposed to be good are as dismal as that, why should we bother because we are bad?"

But that was not the way with Jesus. There is a lovely hymn which we sing sometimes that begins with the words, "Fairest Lord Jesus." He was always fair to see because He was so beautiful with the light of gladness that shone about Him. People always wanted to have Him with them. They wanted Him when some one had died and they were

in sorrow. They wanted Him when they were sick. They wanted Him when they were joyful—when they had a wedding or a feast. When they looked at Him, they wanted to be good because they saw that goodness could be the most friendly and lovely thing in all the world. And His way with the so-called bad people was not to blame them much. He simply made goodness so beautiful that they began to see how much finer it would be to try to be good like Him.

There is a verse in one of the Psalms which most of you know. "O be joyful in the Lord," it says, "serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song." That is the sort of brightness which religion ought to have, and then all the good people would be nicer, and the bad people would be better.

XXXIV

WHICH BOSS?

I HAVE a friend who has a brother, and one day he told some boys and girls about what happened once to his brother when he was a little boy, and I should like to tell it to-day to you.

One day, when this brother was a small boy, another boy who was a friend of his came by and asked him to go fishing. Now the place where they were to fish was in a river which had deep holes in it and so was dangerous. So the boy said to the other one who wanted him to go that he could not because his mother told him not to.

Then said the other boy, "Well, why don't you go anyhow? What are you going to let your mother boss you for?"

"Well," said the first boy, "if I go with you and do what you say, you will be bossing me, and I would rather be bossed by my mother than be bossed by you."

That boy was a smart boy. He had good conscience and good sense too. For it was exactly as he said. The boy who was trying to make fun of him and to make him do something he had no business doing for fear of being ridiculed, with the say-

ing that his mother was bossing him, was trying to be the boss himself. And the first boy knew that the way for him to show his own independent manliness was to choose for himself which one he would listen to.

Unfortunately, a great many boys and girls have not the good sense and the quick wits of that boy. They are afraid of being laughed at, and if anybody comes along and suggests that they go and do something which their father or mother does not want them to do, and tries to make fun of them if they hesitate, they may go along just for fear of what somebody else may say. But there is no courage in that, nor independence either. It is only cowardice and desertion of the real loyalty which ought to be obeyed.

For when a boy has a good mother and listens to her instead of to any Tom, Dick, and Harry who comes along the road, he is not being bossed by something that takes away his real freedom, for his mother is the one person who really knows him better than he knows himself. She can see ahead further than he can, and she knows the things which he in the long run will want to do and want to choose for himself. So when he listens to her, he is only listening to what his own self would say if he were only a little bigger and wiser than he already is.

That is the way it is also with the love of Jesus Himself. Sometimes bad companions will laugh

and sneer at the boy or girl who is held back from evil or goes on the solitary way of goodness through obedience to conscience. "What are you afraid of?" they say. "Why should you be bossed by ideas like that? Go and do what you choose, as we do." But the wise boy and girl know better than that. Back in their heart is the voice of Jesus speaking. They know that if they listen to Him they will be glad of it in the end. They know, as the Prayer Book says, that His "service is perfect freedom." If they let Him guide them, they know He will guide them into the ways which in the end they would have chosen for themselves over and above all other ways.

XXXV

LETTING THE RED WOLF LOOSE

ONE day in Maine I saw in a camp a poster which I have always remembered. Doubtless the people in the state government who had to do with looking after the forests had sent it there, and had sent others like it to be put up where people might read them all through the woods of Maine. In the picture on this poster there were many blackened trunks of trees standing gaunt and lifeless against the sky, and in front there was a blood-red wolf with his tongue lolling from his mouth. Underneath the picture were these words:

FIRE: DON'T TURN HIM LOOSE IN THE WOODS

That is what fire is like when it gets loose in the forests. Fire is cruel as a blood-red wolf. It goes out to devour and destroy, and nothing is left where it has passed by but ashes and emptiness.

Every year in the big woods of America forest fires break out. They come especially in the fall when the woods are dry from the long summer suns. When they once get started, often there is no stopping them for many days. Over miles and

miles of country they rage, destroying whole forests and leaving nothing but the blackened stumps of trees behind. All the men of the countryside may come out to fight the fire, but the flames are as hot and cruel as red wolves darting here and there, and it may be a long time before the fire can be checked.

Yet the biggest fires always start in something which is very small. Sometimes it may be a match or a lighted cigarette carelessly tossed into the dry grass by the side of a road. Sometimes the trouble may start because boys have made a camp-fire and have broken camp in the morning without making sure that the embers were stamped out. A little breeze may have come along after they had left and rolled a few bits of red hot charcoal into the underbrush, and that is enough to start some great blaze going. No good camper will ever be guilty of carelessness like that, but many boys and men who ought to be good campers are bad ones because they do not stop to think of how their carelessness may turn the red wolf loose in the woods.

And it is not only in the woods that the red wolf may get loose. Evil gossip is like a red wolf. A lie is like a red wolf. Some unclean story is like a red wolf. They need to be throttled and stamped out in the very beginning before they ever get turned loose to work their harm. St. James, in his letter which is a part of the New Testament, gave us a wise reminder. "The tongue is a fire," he

said, and "behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." So in all that we say, and especially in what we say about other people, we must beware lest we let the red wolves loose. It is easy enough to be sorry afterward, when the damage has been done, but the best thing is to be careful beforehand so that there will never be any damage which we need be sorry for.

XXXVI

WINDMILLS

ONE summer not long ago I was travelling on Cape Cod, that long curving part of the shore of Massachusetts which reaches out eastward into the Atlantic Ocean, and on which the Pilgrims landed long ago. All up and down the Cape there used to be many windmills. Some of them were very old wooden ones which had been there nobody knows how long. Some of them were the newer ones, made not of wood, but of tall, thin frames of steel. Old and new, there used to be a multitude of them. You could see the flanges of their wheels lifted above the trees like big rosettes against the sky. When the wind blew, all the wheels were turning, and there was a great whirring and a creaking of wheels and rods, while the windmills pumped up water as they were supposed to do.

But now almost all the windmills on Cape Cod are gone. The tall frames may be there yet, but usually they are rusted and neglected. The wheels with their wings which used to catch the wind are idle, many of them broken and slowly falling to pieces. They are being abandoned, and no one depends on them any more.

Over in Holland, also, that quaint old country of flat lands from which only the dikes keep out the sea, I have heard that the windmills likewise are disappearing. One can hardly think of Holland without its windmills, for since a longer time than any one knows, the most conspicuous things to be seen in all that level land of Holland were these same windmills. Everywhere one looked, their wheels, with huge old-fashioned sails like white wings, were lifted up against the sky. But now, even in Holland, the windmills are vanishing, so that people say they must certainly take care to preserve a few of them at least, so that we may see how Holland used to look.

What is the matter with the windmills? And why are they passing away? What has taken their place? How do men pump water as the windmills used to pump it? And how do they grind the corn as the windmills used to grind it? What do they use in place of those big wheels which used to turn in the wind?

Well, they use something which does not seem so pretty or so picturesque as windmills. They use little gasoline engines such as every boy and girl nowadays has seen. And because the gasoline engines have come in, the windmills are passing out.

But why? Why do people let the windmills drop to pieces, and turn to gasoline engines instead? For just one reason: because the gasoline engine will work whenever you want it to, and the wind-

mill would work only whenever it happened that the wind blew. People said, "The windmills are very pretty, but they are not dependable. When we most want them to work the wind may not be blowing, and there they stand, stock still!"

The trouble with some boys and girls is that they are like the windmills. They work only when the wind blows. If some glow of excitement comes along, they will start off in a great activity. If the breezes of their interest happen to be blowing in the right direction, there will be a great and promising turning of their wheels. But when their interest dies down, then they stop. There is nothing inside themselves to keep them going, whether the winds of outside encouragement blow, or whether they are still.

Boys and girls who will be wanted are the dependable ones. Like the gasoline engine, they do not depend on something outside themselves to give them a push. They have learned that it is possible to have strength inside themselves and to be able to use that strength in faithful ways, no matter what may happen. They do not have to wait for fair winds before they can do their work. Hitch them up to some load that needs to be lifted, and they will lift it. Count on them for some fine helpfulness, and they will not fail. They may not be as showy as the windmill kind of people, but they are the ones whom everybody will turn to when real things are to be done.

XXXVII

THE MONEY IN THE ROAD

ONCE there was a boy who was walking along a country road, and in the dust suddenly he saw something shining. He stopped to look at it, and he could scarcely believe his eyes. But, yes, it was,—it really was—a five-dollar gold piece! He picked up that bright, glistening piece of gold and ran home with it, the most excited boy in all that country. He was an honest boy, so he asked questions in the neighbourhood to see if anybody living there had dropped it, but nobody had. Some traveller had lost it, and he had gone far away, and nobody could know who he was. So the boy had five dollars all his own to spend and to do with as he liked.

That seemed a wonderful thing; but something not so wonderful and not so pleasant was to follow. Because he had found a gold piece once, the boy thought he might find one again. So ever afterward when he walked along the country road or through the street of the village, he would be looking at the ground. His eyes would search in front of his feet, and every time he saw something sparkle he thought it might be money. Occasionally

he did find something. One day he found a silver quarter. Two or three times he found a nickel, but he never again found a gold piece, and most of the time he did not find anything at all.

Meanwhile, there were a great many other beautiful things which he did not see, because his eyes were always bent down upon the ground. The skies would be lovely with the colours of the early morning, but he would never see the skies because he was searching for the possible money that might be down there in the dust. The apple-trees would be full of pink and white blossoms in the spring, and birds would be flitting through the orchards, but he did not see the apple-blooms or the birds. Other people would be walking along the road, some of them with happy faces, but he scarcely saw the people. He had no time to look at them, because he was looking so hard at the ground. As the years went by, he lost a great deal more than he gained. The few coins which he did manage now and then to see and pick up were far from being worth as much as all the bright and happy things he did not see.

A good many boys and girls, as they grow up, are somewhat like that boy. They have had a piece of good luck once, and it has started them thinking that they will depend on luck again. In a book by Charles Dickens, which I hope all of you will read if you have not read it already, *David Copperfield,* there is the story of Mr. Micawber.

Mr. Micawber was a good-natured man who never amounted to anything, because he was always expecting, as he said, "that something would turn up." Some day he would have a piece of rare luck and everything would be all right. But mostly something did not turn up, and everything was not all right.

Many people are like the boy, too, not only in the fact that they get into the habit of waiting for something to turn up, but in the fact that what they want is money. They are looking for money all the time, as though that were the most important thing in the world. Sometimes boys and girls, because they have the notion that they must hurry to make money, drop out of school. Often in colleges they do not want to study the subjects which will give them wide ideas of books and people and life, but all they want to learn is something which will help them to get money faster. So the older they grow, the more they are like the boy who went along with his face intent and his eyes staring, as he forever looked for money in the road. They may find the money in the roads of their work and business, but meanwhile they may be failing to see a great many other things. They have not time to stop and be kind to other people. They have not time to see how much beauty there is in the world which they might enjoy. They go along with their eyes in the dust and do not see the sky of God which stretches far above them.

There is a fine verse in one of the Psalms which begins this way: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh even from the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth." It is a good thing always to be lifting our eyes unto the hills; to be thinking of those things which elevate our thoughts and remind us that God's thoughts for us are high and challenging, like the hills. Then our life will be a much bigger thing and a brighter thing than if our eyes were always searching for something which we think may glitter in the dust.

XXXVIII

GIRDING UP THE LIONS

ONCE there was a little girl who always liked to read the evening lesson when her father had family prayers. Even though she was just a little girl, she had learned how to read very well and never stumbled over the ordinary words. Only now and then, when she came to a word which she had never seen before, would she read it wrong.

This night she was reading from one of the letters of St. Paul where he speaks about men who gird up their loins. That is just as though we should say—tighten up the belt around our waist, as men do when they have hard work to do, or a race to run, or a battle to fight. But this word LOINS, which means waist, the little girl had never seen before, so when she came to it she read it "Gird up your LIONS," and went skipping along, not knowing that she had read it wrong at all.

But though gird up your LIONS does not happen to be what the Bible says, it might be a very good thing to say, nevertheless; and it is a good thing to think about. All of us have things within us which are like lions, and very often they run and ramp about very much as they please, without being

girded up at all. Here is a boy who has a fiery hot temper and often, as we say, it gets away with him. It roars and thunders and shows its teeth, and is generally as disagreeable and dangerous-looking as a wild lion let loose. Or here is a girl who has the spirit of leadership. The lion is called the king of beasts, and there is a sort of lion in her. She wants everybody to do her way; everybody must play her game or there shall not be any playing at all. Her lion is stalking about, very determined and overbearing, ready to snap the head off any one who will not do exactly what it says.

There are other boys and girls and men and women whom I might tell about, but I don't need to, for you can see them for yourselves. Some of them, perhaps, are your friends, and some of them perhaps are—you. You have your lions of temper or of self-importance which are not girded up. They go about loose and do exactly what they please.

But suppose we should gird up the lions. Suppose, that is, we should put a harness on them and make them work for us instead of doing exactly what they please. Then the lions would be glorious things to have. Nobody wants to kill a boy's fiery temper and his high spirits, and turn him into a weak, dull sort of a person. Nobody wants to destroy a girl's gift of being a leader, and of influencing others so that they naturally will do her way.

But what we want to do is to take the high spirit and manage it so that it becomes not an explosion of anger like a wild lion let loose, but courage and strength and fearlessness, and so that we may have all the brave heart of the lion with none of the lion's cruelty. And what we want to do with the wish to be the leader is to harness that and put that, too, under the guidance of the love of God, so that it will be gentle and generous, and mindful of the wishes of others as well as of our own. Then we really shall have "girded up our lions," and we shall be stronger and better than we ever were before.

XXXIX

THE TORN FLAG

THERE is a thing which I keep very carefully among my treasures, and yet if I should show it to you, you might be astonished that I keep it, for you would think that it does not look like a treasure at all. It looks as though it were a little piece of rag. One end of it is torn and frayed. It does not seem to be particularly clean, and it is very faded.

But if you examine it carefully, you will see that it is something more than a rag. There are colours in it which all the fading has not quite destroyed. There is a strip of blue, and a strip of white, and a strip of red; and I can imagine that, if you looked at it, presently your faces would brighten, and you would say, "Oh, I know what that is. It is a flag, a French flag." And you would be right, for it is just that.

This little flag I found one day in a town, Pont-a-Mousson, in the northeastern corner of France. It was on a day in October, 1918, while the great war still continued. This proud old town was near the battle-line. It had been fired on more than once by the great German guns over the hills and

bombarded by aeroplanes from above. Some of the houses were heaps of broken ruins. All the people had gone away because it was too dangerous for any one to try to live there. As you walked through the deserted streets, you heard not a single human sound. In the whole quiet town, unless the distant guns happened to be sounding, there was nothing louder than the murmur of the river that ran beneath the old stone bridge. It was pitiful to see the empty houses and to think of all the people who had loved their homes and lived there happily and now were scattered far away. It made one think of all the sadness and the bitter cost of war.

But the little faded flag which I found there in the deserted town spoke of something else. It told of hope and courage. It told of all the dauntless patience and sacrifice of the French people who had suffered and endured through the long, weary war, but who in the end should triumph and come back to their homes again. In itself the flag was not an impressive thing, being, as I have told you, only a little piece of bunting, and a very torn and faded one at that. But it was not what the flag looked like which told the whole story. It was what the flag meant, and what it helped you think of, that made it something one wanted to pick up and keep as a possession very priceless.

When I see that flag I think of other ways in which we can remember that it is not appearances which matter most. Here is a boy and a girl who

may be poor. They have no fine clothes. They have not any possessions which one would envy. They may have to work hard and suffer difficulties which other boys and girls who seem more fortunate do not have to meet at all. Just to look at them one would not say that they were very important. But wait a moment. When you really know them, what do you think of when you see their faces and hear their names? Do they make you think, as the little French flag did, of patience and determination and stout hearts? Do they make you think of a good courage which is stronger than any bad fortune, and of stout hearts which go straight on doing their best and never stop to whine over what others would call hard luck? If they do, then they are beautiful just as the little piece of flag is beautiful, because of all the fine things in this human life of ours which they help us to remember and believe in.

XL

WHEN DEFEAT IS VICTORY

THERE is a Sunday in the Church Year called Palm Sunday, and on that day in many churches palm branches are used to adorn the chancels. Looking at them, we remember the Sunday long ago when Jesus went into Jerusalem. Great crowds of people met Him. They tore off branches from the palm trees growing by the road, and spread them on the way over which He was to pass. They did that because that is the way people did when a great conqueror was coming. They wanted to do Him honour, as they would do honour to a victorious king.

Yet it was a strange kind of victory to which Jesus was coming. For five days He would be in Jerusalem with His enemies watching Him sullenly. Then on Friday they would take Him out to Calvary, and nail Him to a cross. He would die on that bitter hill, and it would seem as though He had been defeated. Those who hated Him would mock and sneer, and say, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." They would laugh at the idea that He was a conqueror now. What more could He do that men needed to be concerned with, now that He was crucified and dead?

Yet as the years have gone on, we know better and better that Jesus was not defeated. He was a conqueror, just as He seemed to be on Palm Sunday. He was victorious in a far more wonderful way than even the people expected that day. Death could not destroy Him. He rose again. His beautiful, living spirit came back to His disciples, and they knew Him. He said He would stay close by them forever. They might not see Him with their bodily eyes, but He would be there. His life would touch their lives and make them strong.

And that is the way it has been all down through the years. Jesus Christ seems more powerful now than He was when He lived in Galilee. The finest men and the finest women conquer wrong things and have strength to do the hard, brave things all through the years, because Jesus speaks to their hearts and bids them be like Him.

So it is not what happens at one particular moment that determines whether we are conquered or are conquerors. It is not the way things look outside, but what we are inside that matters. If our own hearts are brave and faithful, in the long run nothing can defeat us. And that is true even of those who seem to die.

One of the noblest books which has been written in our time is the story of the journey to the South Pole by Captain Robert F. Scott and his companions. Over the ice and through the bitter cold

of the Antarctic Ocean they journeyed on until they reached the very end of the earth, and then they started back toward their ship and safety; but they were not to arrive. The cold grew more terrible. Blizzards blew the blinding snow into their eyes. Day by day their strength was waning. One of the men saw that he had less strength than any of his companions, and he saw that he was holding the others back. So one night, very quietly, he said good-bye to Captain Scott and walked out of the little tent which they had pitched, into the blizzard. He never came back; for he knew that without him they could go ahead faster, and might have a better chance to save their lives. There on that white field of ice, the rescuers, who came later to find Captain Scott and his friends, put up a cross, and on the cross is this inscription: "Hereabouts died a very gallant gentleman, Captain L. E. G. Oates of the Inniskilling Dragoons. In March, 1912, returning from the Pole, he walked willingly to his death in a blizzard, to try and save his comrades beset by hardships."

Captain Scott and one companion who was left went on farther, but at length the blizzard stopped them too. When the rescuers came and found his body in the tent, they found on his knees the journal which he had been writing, and this is what he said: "How much better it has been than lounging in too great comfort at home. I do not regret the journey, which has shown that men can endure

hardship, help one another, and meet death with as great fortitude as ever in the past." That seemed to be defeat, but it was also victory.

So it is not what happens to us, but what happens IN us that supremely counts. Whenever we conquer our own fears, whenever we do with finest courage the thing we have to do, then, no matter what the results may seem to be at the moment, we are victorious, and we are counted as those who have been successful in the eyes of God.

XLI

SHOOT-FLYING HILL

I HAVE heard that down on the coast of New England, near the place where the early Pilgrim settlers came, there is a hill which is the highest point in all the near-by region, and it has a curious old name. It is called Shoot-Flying Hill.

You will wonder where such a strange name as that came from, and what it means,—and this is the answer. Long ago the Indians used to live in that part of the country, and they hunted with bows and arrows. In the fall of every year, flocks of wild ducks and geese would be flying south, away from the New England winter toward the warm countries, and in the spring they would be flying north again. They flew so high in the air that the Indians with their bows and arrows could not reach them from the ordinary ground; but on the top of the hill they were near enough for their arrows to reach, and they could bring down the ducks and geese which made their food. So they called the hill Shoot-Flying Hill, and even to this day the quaint old name remains.

When I heard about those Indians and Shoot-Flying Hill, it made me think of something else. The Indians were wise to know they could not

reach the things they needed down on the common, level ground. They had to go up on a high hill; and that is a sort of picture of something which boys and girls, and men and women too, need often to remember. The things worth having cannot be got as long as we stay on the ordinary level. We must climb up high before we can hope to reach them.

Think how this is true with boys and girls in school. There is a prize which is offered for the one who stands best in his studies. You see that prize given at commencement time. Perhaps it is a fine book or shining gold medal, and you think to yourself, "Next year I should like to win that prize myself." But perhaps when next year comes you are more ready to think you would like to have the prize than you are really to take the trouble and to do the hard work which is necessary in order for the winning. You want to go along, perhaps, in the easy way; studying a little but not too much, finishing the lessons which are easy but skipping the parts which are hard, keeping on the old level of what you have always done without struggling up to something higher and harder than you have ever done before. But in that kind of fashion you cannot win the prize. It will go far over your head, as the ducks and geese flew far over the heads and out of the reach of the Indians down on the ground. You must climb up on the hills of harder work, you must get to the top of

the class and not stay at the bottom or in the middle, if you would win the things you say you want.

And that is the way it is, not only in school but through all the years of life that follow. The best things we can have fly high. The prizes other people may give us fly high, and the prizes of God fly high, also. If we want to win the name of being brave and true and useful, we cannot do it by just walking along on the ground of what we think is the good-enough. We cannot move on the average level where the crowd is satisfied. We must climb the high hills of the extra effort and the extra desire if we are to bring down the great trophies of character that fly in the skies of God.

XLII

WHERE DOES POLITENESS BEGIN?

IN the subway trains of one of our cities, there were put up one day large signs with a picture on them. The picture was of a crowd of people with a very polite and smiling looking conductor. The conductor looked pleased, and the people looked pleased, and everything was merry altogether. And over the picture were these words, "Courtesy from all to all makes everybody happy."

Notice the way those words run. Most of us begin at the other end. Instead of being sure that everybody shall certainly receive courtesy and all polite good manners *from* us, we are sometimes thinking about what other people will do *to* us. We may be a little grouchy and disagreeable ourselves, but we want the other persons to be polite, and, if they are not, sometimes we make a great commotion and act as though something outrageous had happened.

One day, not long before Christmas time, I went into a store which sells books and was also selling Christmas cards. Up on the floor where the cards were for sale, there was a girl who had been standing there all day waiting upon customers, and I heard her ask a man who was standing at her

counter what time it was, and, when he told her, she said in a sort of little whispering way, as if to herself, "Oh, how long this day is!" She was very tired, for she had been working long, hard hours all through the Christmas shopping time. Then presently up bustled a prosperous looking lady in a great hurry, out of breath, and very impatient. She wanted to know where the calendars were; and when the girl at the counter told her very politely that they were on the floor below, she flew into a great commotion. "Why weren't the calendars on that floor? What sense was there in not having them where the Christmas cards were? Why had not some one told her before where they were?" And so on and so on, as rudely as she pleased, while the girl only looked at her a little sorrowfully and said nothing. For if she had said even one little impatient word, probably this lady who wanted to buy the calendars would have gone down to the manager and told him how impolite the girl up-stairs had been and how she wouldn't stand it, and how he ought to discharge the girl or else she would go and buy her things at another store. She was one of the people who wanted politeness *to* her, but she had never stopped to think that it would be much more important that every one had politeness *from* her.

Did you ever wonder who teaches the girls in the telephone central who answer when you ring your telephone? I know a great many boys and

girls who ought to go to that same teacher, whoever it may be. For the telephone girls just never will be impolite. No matter how bad tempered and snappish people may be who call up on all the telephones that ring at once, they always say "Thank you" and "Please." It is just as though they were playing a game of politeness and had learned it so well that they could never lose. And because they are so polite, even the most unmannerly people will be ashamed after a while of being anything else. They will have to try to be polite too.

You remember what the Golden Rule says. It says, "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you." Let pleasantness and good temper and all considerate kindness go out from you,—and go out first. That is what the Golden Rule means, and it does not mean to wait with a grudging face to see if every one else does exactly as we like, and only then perhaps will we be pleasant.

"Courtesy from all to all." That is a good rule. If we all tried it, we should have a happier time on street-cars, in school, playing our games, at home, and everywhere.

XLIII

THE BOY WHOSE LEGS WOULDN'T GO

ONCE upon a time there was a little boy who had something the matter with his legs, and no one in his family could imagine what the matter was. He would walk along very well, for a little while, and then, all of a sudden, his legs would begin to stumble and give way under him. His mother talked to his father, and his father talked to his mother, and they both worried and thought that something dreadful was going to happen. Perhaps the little boy would be paralyzed so that he could not walk at all. Perhaps he would have to go in a wheel-chair all his life. And what with "perhaps this" and "perhaps that," they imagined nearly every terrible thing there was, and almost grew sick themselves the more they thought how sick the little boy might come to be.

Some of the doctors did not know what the matter with the little boy was. But at last by good fortune they brought him to a doctor who had his eyes open and knew a thing or two. "Where do you live?" said the doctor to the little boy's mother. And she told him that she lived in an apartment house up on the tenth floor.

"Are all your rooms on that same floor so that everything is on that one level?" asked the doctor. And the little boy's mother said "Yes." "How does he get back and forth from your apartment to the street?" asked the doctor. "Why," said his mother, "by the elevator, of course." "And he never walks up any stairs, and here in this flat city he never climbs any hills?" "No, he doesn't," answered his mother. "Then," said the doctor, "that is what is the matter with him. There is no terrible disease about this boy at all. It is nothing but that you have never let him learn to lift his legs. How can his muscles grow if he never has a chance to walk up-stairs or climb a hill?"

So his mother took the little boy away, and made sure afterward that he was taken out to walk in places where he had hills to climb, and that now and then he trudged up steps instead of forever riding on elevators, and presently the muscles in his legs grew strong, and he could run and play as well as any one.

So much for the little boy. What about us? Our legs may seem to be all right. But the flesh and blood legs of our bodies are not the only ones. What about the legs of our minds? Sometimes they stumble and crumple under us like the legs of the little boy whose only trouble was that he had never had any practise in walking up-stairs. We start out to study, and presently our mind wobbles and we stop. We are given a piece of work to do

that needs hard thought. But all our thinking grows feeble after a while, and our minds sit down to rest. What is the trouble with us then? The trouble is that we have not practised enough on the steep grades. We are too content to be going along always just on the easy level instead of being glad of the difficult hills to climb.

In the beautiful hymn which begins, "The Son of God goes forth to war," there is a line which says, "They climbed the steep ascent of heaven." People do not get to heaven by simply sauntering along the roads where we can go on all one easy level with our hands in our pockets. The heavens of all the things worth winning have to be won by the steep ascent. In our minds and souls as well as in our bodies, we must cultivate the muscles that lift us up if we are to be as strong and free and joyous as we ought to be.

XLIV

LEFT OUT IN THE COLD

ONE year at Christmas time, instead of having a tree which had been cut down from its roots and which after it had been used for a little while with the Christmas candles and the Christmas decorations on it would wither and be fit for nothing except to be thrown away, we had, in a house which I could tell you of, a little living tree. It was not as big and stately as Christmas trees often are, but it had not been chopped down or sawed off from its roots, as the big trees would have to be. It had been taken out of the ground, roots and all, and planted with its own forest earth in a jar, so that it was green and living and able to grow. It need not be thrown away when the Christmas days were over, but could be kept until it grew too big for the jar to hold its roots, and then it could be planted out of doors and live, perhaps, for years and years.

At Christmas time, the little tree was very pretty, but in the weeks afterward it began to be prettier still, for in the warm house the little tree imagined spring must have come. The sap began to run through its trunk and through its branches, and it

began to bud. At the end of every branch, the new growth came out, tender and soft, until the tree looked as though it had tiny white candles standing up all over it. People who saw the little tree loved to look at it, because it gave them a cheerful feeling of life and growth and the coming of spring.

On mild days, the jar in which the tree was would be put out of doors, so that the sun might shine upon it; and that was good for the tree, if it were not left out too long. But one day the tree was forgotten altogether. Some one who had put it out did not bring it in again. The sun went down and night came, and during the night the weather grew bitter cold. If the tree had been a big tree, used to living out of doors, the cold would not have mattered; but this was only a little tree which had been kept in warm places and which had begun to think it could let its sap rise as though spring had come and as though it would be warm always. So when the frost came that night, the sap in the tree was frozen, the new growth at the end of its limbs, instead of opening upward eagerly toward the sun, withered and drooped in pathetic little shreds that curled downward from the branches. Everything which the tree had gained in all the days before was destroyed by one touch of frost, and, instead of being pretty to look at, it was now only a little, dispirited, blighted thing.

Now the trouble had come about not because anybody disliked the tree. Nobody wanted to hurt it; but somebody forgot to take care of it. It was put out of doors during the warm day, which was all very well, but not brought in again before the darkness and the freezing weather came, and that was disaster. Nobody deliberately did it harm, but somebody did leave it out in the cold, and that was harm enough.

What happened to the tree sometimes happens to people, too. As the tree was a pretty thing which started growing in the house, so there may be pretty things which start growing in our hearts. The thought of Jesus Christ stirs within us, as the sap stirred in the branches of the tree. We think we would like to let our own lives grow bigger and finer, as His life grew. The little good intentions begin to bud all over us, as the branches budded on the tree. We will try to be kinder than we have been. We will be more thoughtful of others. We will be more generous. Good intentions, at first, are tender things, and they have to be protected, at first, until they become so strong that after a while they will keep on growing of themselves, no matter what may happen; but the trouble is that sometimes we forget them altogether. We turn the little tree of good intentions out of the warm place of our remembrance. We do not mean to kill our good intentions, but we do forget them. We do not willingly harm them, but

we are absent-minded and we leave them out in the cold; and then to our distress we find that all these good intentions which were budding in our lives, and all the happy beginnings of new goodness, have been frost-bitten, and we must start all over again.

Once there was a boy who came to his father, and he had been very careless. He had done something he was much ashamed of. "I did not mean to," he said to his father, "I did not mean to." But his father replied, "No, you did not mean to, but that was not enough; you ought to have meant NOT to." What his father said was true. Just not meaning to do careless and hurtful things does not save us from the consequences. We must be so thoughtful beforehand that we will not go blundering on into the mistake which catches us unawares. If the person who left the little tree outdoors had been thoughtful first, the tree would not have been frozen.

If you and I are thoughtful first, the buds of our good intentions will not be frozen either. We shall not forget all about them and leave them out in the cold, but we shall keep them with happy carefulness where they are protected and warm, until they have grown so strong that nothing can hurt them any more.

XLV

HOW TO BE HEALTHY ALL THROUGH

EVERY Christmas on the back of thousands of letters, and here and there on thousands of Christmas packages, are pasted pretty little stamps which are sold by a great organization that is raising money to help cure people who are sick, and to prevent others from being sick. And people all over the country buy these stamps, so that the pennies by thousands and tens of thousands and even millions may roll in to help in that fine work. On the last Christmas before I wrote this page which you are reading now, the stamps had on them two red candles, with their bright flames burning in front of holly leaves, and underneath the candles were these words, "Merry Christmas and Good Health."

Those are good words to put together, for the kind of Christmas which results, not in good health but in making us sick, is not very sensible, and in the end not very merry either. Some boys and girls grow so excited because Christmas has come that they want to eat everything in sight which they happen to want—nuts and raisins, and candy and cake, by the handful,—as though they never ex-

pected to see any more until another Christmas came around. Then on the day after Christmas perhaps you will find them in bed, looking very solemn and sick, with some one giving them dreadful medicine out of a spoon. And if that were you —which I hope it isn't—I know you would say that would be a poor end to a merry Christmas.

Yes, at Christmas time and at all times through the year, we have the best times and the merriest if we can keep good health. That is the way it was with Jesus. You remember that in the Gospel which tells how He was born in Bethlehem and then how He grew up as a boy at Nazareth, it says that He "increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man." Year by year His body was growing, clean and strong and fit for the work He was going to do, and one of the reasons why people loved Him and followed Him was because the very look of Him was full of grace and strength. If you will read all about His life as it is written in the Gospels, you will see that He needed a sound body in order to accomplish all the things He crowded into His days, and that He never could have gone about making sick people well in the way He did unless He had been well Himself. Neither can people do God's work today unless they keep themselves as well as they are able. Our bodies are like the workmen's tools, and we cannot do good work unless the tools are clean and fit and strong.

So certainly it is important that we should keep our bodies in good health. But it is also true that good health has to do with other things in addition to our bodies. Good health means health and wholeness everywhere, not only in the part of us that people see, but also in the parts they do not see, including the thoughts of our minds and the desires of our hearts. It is a bad thing to be sick in our bodies, but it is an even worse thing to be sick in our souls. A boy may have a case of measles, and that is very uncomfortable, but probably it will not last long, and he will get over it; but if he has a case of MEANNESS which gets into his mind, so that he thinks cruel thoughts and makes dishonourable plans, then he is sick in a more serious way and a harder way to get over. You know children, just as I do, who whenever they get near poison ivy always are poisoned by it, and they have a wretched, disagreeable time, so that they know the best thing for them to do is to keep as far away from it as they can; but there are poison IDEAS also that grow up in every group of boys and girls, and it is just as important that we should keep far away from these, in order that our imaginations may be clean and sound. Young people, and old people too, must look out for the health of the life inside as well as for the body outside. Sometimes people get rheumatism, and that makes their hands stiff; but it is worse to get gloomy-tism, because that makes the heart stiff,

and then it is not easy to be generous and thoughtful and kind.

So let us remember that the health which goes with a Merry Christmas and which must go with all the thought of our Lord who was born at Christmas time is the health which has to do with us through and through. It is the health of bodies that control their appetites and keep their muscles keen and true and the blood running joyous in their veins. It is the health of minds kept clean from the poison of all mean and ungenerous thoughts. It is the health of hearts which are beating, like the heart of Jesus, with the love of all beautiful things and with a great, glad desire to be doing the work of God.

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